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Translated Texts for Historians
Volume 41

Selected Letters of Libanius

from the Age of Constantius and Julian

Translated with an introduction and notes by
SCOTT BRADBURY

Liverpool
University
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Florence, Italy
December 2003

ABBREVIATIONS

(For abbreviations of magistracies and similar items, see Glossary)

- B precedes the number of a letter of Libanius in the present volume
- BLZG* Otto Seeck, *Die Briefe des Libanius zeitlich geordnet*, Leipzig, 1906, repr. Hildesheim, 1967
- CTh* *Theodosiani Libri XVI cum constitutionibus Sirmondianis*, ed. Th. Mommsen, 2nd edn, Berlin, 1954
- Ep.* precedes the number of a letter of Libanius in Richard Foerster's Teubner edition of the Greek text
- F Richard Foerster (ed.), *Libanius, Opera*, 12 vols, Leipzig, 1903–1927, repr. Hildesheim, 1963
- FOL* Paul Petit, *Les Fonctionnaires dans l'oeuvre de Libanius: analyse prosopographique*, Paris, 1994
- LRE* A.H.M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire: A Social, Economic, and Administrative Survey*, 3 vols, Oxford, 1964; repr. Baltimore, 1986 in 2 vols
- LSJ* *A Greek–English Lexicon*, ed. H.G. Liddell and R. Scott, Oxford, 1973
- N precedes the number of a letter of Libanius in A. F. Norman (ed.), *Libanius, Autobiography and Selected Letters*, 2 vols, Loeb Classical Library, Cambridge, MA and London, 1992
- PLRE* *The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire, vol. 1, A.D. 260–395*, ed. A.H.M. Jones, J.R. Martindale and J. Morris, Cambridge, 1980
- RE* *Real-Encyclopädie der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft*, ed. A. Pauly, G. Wissowa and W. Kroll, Berlin, 1893–
- W Johannes C. Wolf (ed.), *Libanius, Epistulae*, Amsterdam, 1738

GLOSSARY

- agens in rebus* Imperial courier whose corps (*schola*) reported to the Master of Offices (*magister officiorum*).
- agon* Greek ‘contest’ or ‘competition’, used of athletic contests and, by extension, of any struggle or metaphorical contest.
- agonothete* A financial sponsor of Greek games or contests, esp. expensive ones, such as the Olympic Games.
- annona* Tax levied in kind (usually grain) and paid to members of the civil service and army, who could then convert their goods to money at fixed exchange rates.
- assessor A legal adviser who ‘sits beside’ a judge, normally a governor or prefect.
- Caesar A subordinate to the reigning emperor, termed the Augustus, and normally an heir-apparent.
- choregus* A sponsor of one of the more expensive civic duties. The term derived from the sponsor of a chorus at the drama competitions in Classical Athens.
- clarissimus* The rank required for entry into the senate, normally conferred for Libanius’ Eastern contemporaries by governing a consular province (see *consularis*).
- codicil Document awarding high rank or honorary title, signed and conferred by the emperor.
- comes* An honorary rank making one a ‘companion’ of the emperor, cf. Eng. ‘Count’.
- comes domesticorum* Commander of the emperor’s household guard.
- comes domorum per Cappadociam* Official charged with supervision of imperial estates in Cappadocia. Income from them supported the household expenses of the imperial palace.
- comes Orientis* Count of the East, the special term used for the *vicarius* in charge of the diocese of Oriens. He was subordinate to the Praetorian Prefect of the East.
- comes rerum privatarum* Count of Private Properties, one of the two

- principal financial officials at court. He oversaw the emperor's personal estates and properties.
- comes sacrarum largitionum* The Count of the Sacred Largesses, one of the two principal financial officials at court. He oversaw the imperial mints and the empire's money supply.
- Commission of Chalcedon A commission empanelled by the emperor Julian to judge those accused of criminal conduct under Constantius II, particularly those involved in the downfall of his brother Gallus.
- consistory The emperor's advisory council, which deliberated about matters of state and awarded political offices.
- consularis* A rank attached to the governor of more important provinces, superior to a *praeses*. Syria was a 'consular' province because it was governed by the *consularis Syriae*.
- CRP *comes rerum privatarum*.
- CSL *comes sacrarum largitionum*.
- curialis* A member of a municipal council (Lat. *curia*).
- curia* Latin for 'municipal council'.
- decurion A member of a municipal council. The term is interchangeable with *curialis* (Lat. *curia*).
- follis* Latin 'purse', denoting the senatorial surtax paid in gold as part of the process by which a man entered the senate, whether at Rome or Constantinople.
- honoratus* An ex-official who had held a high office (Lat. *honor*; Gk. *arche*), such as a governorship, for a fixed term of office, usually not more than a year or two.
- liturgy A public service entailing financial outlay, often voluntary in earlier periods, but usually compulsory by the fourth century.
- magister epistularum graecarum* Master of Greek Letters, the chief official responsible for Greek versions of the emperor's correspondence.
- magister libellorum* Master of Petitions, the chief official overseeing one of the three imperial correspondence bureaux (*scrinia*).
- magister officiorum* Master of Offices, a key palatine official, like a 'Chief of Staff'. He commanded the imperial bodyguards, and supervised the imperial chancelleries, the imperial couriers (*agentes in rebus*), the public post, and reception of foreign embassies.
- notarius* Notary, an expert in shorthand charged with taking notes of the proceedings of the emperor's consistory. The corps of notaries was entrusted with much sensitive business, esp. by the emperor Constantius II.

officium Bureau or office in the imperial administration, whether at court or in the provinces. Members of the bureau were *officiales*.

paideia Greek ‘education’, implying in its broadest sense an initiation into the Greek way of life.

philotimia Greek ‘love of honour’, referring to the competitive spirit through which civic notables spent heavily in the service of their native cities, spurred by ‘love of the home town’ and a desire for personal and family glory.

PPO Praetorian Prefect (Lat. *praefectus praetorio*)

principalis Wealthy and powerful member of a city council. Councils in the fourth century are increasingly dominated by a clique of *principales*.

PUC Prefect of Constantinople (Lat. *praefectus urbis Constantinopolitanae*), the chief civilian official in the capital and president of the senate. The office was modelled on that of the Prefect of Rome (Lat. *praefectus urbis Romae*),

res privata The emperor’s ‘private property’, overseen by a *Comes rerum privatarum*.

rhetor Greek ‘public speaker’, used by Libanius to mean 1) an orator, 2) an advocate or lawyer, 3) a teacher of rhetoric.

Syriarch Official presiding over the provincial assembly of Syria, which administered the imperial cult. Normally a city councillor, he funded games and beast hunts. His office is the Syriarchy or the Syriarchate.

vicarius Official overseeing a group of provinces, collectively referred to as a diocese. The *vicarius*’ superior was the Praetorian Prefect.

vicennalia Celebration to honour twenty years of an emperor’s rule.

A NOTE ON DOCUMENTATION

The scholarly tools available for working on Libanius' letters are extremely cumbersome. There exist three different numbering systems for the 1544 letters and two different numbering systems for the 700 people who appear in the letters. It has seemed reasonable to me to simplify the style of documentation in order to make the volume more readable. Persons cited in the notes are normally followed by a number, e.g. 'Andronicus 3', who can be found in A.H.M. Jones, et al., *The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire*, vol. 1, A.D. 260–395 (Cambridge 1971) [= *PLRE*], by looking alphabetically under 'Andronicus 3'. There will be no full *PLRE* citation with page number. Some persons are followed by Roman numerals, e.g. 'Alexander vi', indicating that he was not of sufficient social status to be included in *PLRE*. He will be found in the only comprehensive prosopographical work on the corpus, Otto Seeck's *Die Briefe des Libanius zeitlich geordnet*, published in 1906 (= *BLZG*). Extremely common names may have a double citation, for example, 'Eusebius 15/xii'.



GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The 183 letters of Libanius in the present volume were composed in the single decade AD 355–65, one of the most richly documented periods in ancient history. They can be added to the 193 letters in A.F. Norman's two volumes in the Loeb Classical Library, *Autobiography and Selected Letters*, published in 1992, bringing the tally of Libanius' letters currently available in English to 376, just shy of 25 per cent of the total of 1544 letters. The current volume and the Loeb volumes do not overlap in letter selection and thus support and supplement one another.¹ Norman arranged his letters chronologically, employing two main criteria in the selection process. His choices tend to illuminate the *Autobiography* and/or they are historically significant. I have grouped the letters in the present volume not by chronology, but by class of correspondent, for example, 'Letters For Family Members' or 'Letters to Provincial Governors'. Within these groupings, I have sought to keep together, insofar as possible, letters to the same recipient. The value of this arrangement is that it will help the reader to get better control of the daunting prosopography or 'Who's Who' of the corpus. A major obstacle to reading Libanius is the extraordinary range of his connections: nearly 700 persons appear in his letter collection! Moreover, a series of letters to the same recipient allows Libanius' intimacy with or distance from a correspondent to emerge in a way that it does not when the series are broken up in order to preserve a chronological order. Each letter is preceded by its date of composition, and an appendix of 'Principal Correspondents' sets out in chronological order all the letters translated into English in which a major correspondent is the addressee or is mentioned. Like Norman, I have sought out letters that are historically significant for the political, social and religious history of the age, but much more than Norman I have included letters that illustrate the day-to-day 'networking' engaged in

¹ Cabouret (2000) includes 98 letters in French translation, of which 18 appear neither in the Loeb nor the current volume: *epp.* 397, 423, 534, 107, 368, 281, 85, 114, 664, 723, 1379, 1429, 1189, 1467, 1517, 871, 898, 1110.

by Libanius' contemporaries in their pursuit of social and political advancement. Many of the letters included here involve the creation and manipulation of patronage networks and the interaction of provincial elites with the imperial administration.

The introduction to the present volume is divided into three sections: The Life of Libanius, Late Roman Government in the Greek East, and The Preservation and Survival of Libanius' Letter Collection.

THE LIFE OF LIBANIUS

The voluminous literary output of Libanius of Antioch, now collected in 12 Teubner volumes covering 19½ inches on a bookshelf, makes him the best-documented 'University Professor' from the ancient world. He is, in addition, a critical source for the history of the Greek East in the fourth century. His 64 orations, many on important political and social themes, range in date from 349 to 392, but the most significant of them fall into two distinct periods: the Julianic orations (355–65 for our purposes) and the Theodosian orations from the 380s.² Of particular importance for the reconstruction of his life is the *Autobiography* (*Oration* 1), finished in its initial version around 374 and intended as an account of his life with the role of good and bad Fortune used as its unifying theme. However, he continued to add to the work, so that it became in his later years a kind of personal journal, shapeless and ramshackle, but a source of consolation from his increasing troubles. In addition to the *Autobiography*, we have his vast epistolary corpus, falling in two distinct groupings of letters widely separated in time: some 1269 letters (*epp.* 1–839, 1113–542) written in the single decade, spring 355 to summer 365, and some 273 letters (*epp.* 840–1112) falling in the five year span from summer 388 to summer 393. All of the letters in the current collection derive from the larger corpus of 1269 dating from 355–65, the last years of the reign of Constantius II, the brief ascendancy of Julian the Apostate, and the aftermath of Julian's pagan revival. Libanius has also left us 51 declamations, that is, speeches on invented, often artificial, themes or themes from ancient history. Public performance of declamations was immensely popular in the Roman empire. It was principally through 'declaiming' that a sophist established his reputation with a wider public and maintained it throughout the span of his career. The composition and delivery of these performance

² A list of the orations with dates can be found in Norman (1969), I–liii. The Julianic orations are translated in Norman (1969), the Theodosian orations in Norman (1977).

speeches are often discussed by Libanius in letters to learned friends who took an avid interest in such matters.³

Youth and Education

Libanius was born into an old established family in Antioch in AD 314. Fatherless by the age of eleven, he was raised by his mother and maternal uncles, Panolbius and Phasganius, both men of distinction. His early years were a period of rebuilding for his family, which had suffered from an outburst of imperial anger a decade before his birth. In 303, faced with an army garrison in revolt, the notables of Antioch opposed the rebels, but later found themselves punished with executions and confiscations by an emperor apparently as threatened by local aristocrats arming themselves as by rebellious troops. In any event, Libanius' grandfather was put to death and his property confiscated.⁴ Libanius retained throughout his life a distrust of autocratic power and always maintained a prudent distance from the purple, even under the emperor Julian.

He received the traditional education of his social class, consisting largely of study of Greek poetry and rhetoric, and by the age of 15 he had begun to show a disconcerting passion for his studies. When his uncle Panolbius staged the Olympic Games at Antioch in 328, Libanius failed to attend, preferring to stay at home and study, bizarre behaviour that prompted his uncle to exclaim that the boy would become a sophist (*Or.* 1.5). The remark was not a compliment, and Libanius concedes that, had his father lived, his life would have taken a different course and he would now be concerned with the 'affairs of the city council, or the law, or even, god forbid, the governors' thrones!' (*Or.* 1.6). His remark neatly sums up the three conventional career paths pursued by the Hellenic landed gentry in the fourth century.

By birth Libanius was a member of one of the foremost families of Antioch's city council (Gk. *boule*, Lat. *curia*), which was responsible for maintenance of the urban fabric of the city, the funding of games and festivals and collection of imperial taxes. Local notables with adequate landholdings could expect to be nominated to their council, and the councils

³ There is now in English an excellent volume of declamations in translation, see Russell (1996).

⁴ The revolt is alluded to at *Orr.* 11.158–62; 19.45–46; 20.18–20. Downey (1961), 330, suggests that the emperor suspected Christian involvement in the revolt, in reaction to anti-Christian persecution, but that motive would not apply to Libanius' grandfather.

had by the fourth century become largely hereditary bodies, whose duties could be avoided only through legal immunity. The quest to avoid curial duties is indeed a central feature of the age and Libanius' own conduct illustrates this important trend. He was himself expected to take up curial duties on coming of age, and he had before him the model of his revered uncle Phasganius, a dominant member of Antioch's *curia*. Libanius himself, through personal temperament, the model of his uncle, and an intense love of Greek literature with its focus on the Athenian city-state, was fiercely devoted to traditional Greek civic life and regarded everything Roman as an unwelcome cultural intrusion. 'Who is there who doesn't know,' he asks, 'that the council is the soul of a city?' (*Or.* 18.147). And yet, he would pursue a career as a sophist, which assured him immunity from council duties and, in later years, he would struggle tirelessly in his unsuccessful bid to secure immunity for his illegitimate son, Cimon. Moreover, he wrote scores of letters for friends and acquaintances seeking curial immunity (cf. *ep.* 293/B72, 1357/B95, 1224/B168, 374/B177).

In view of his rhetorical talent, Libanius might well have pursued advocacy or law, as did so many of his schoolmates and pupils. It was profitable and an important stepping stone to higher posts, since advocates were well placed for securing positions as governors or assessors, the governor's legal advisers. In Libanius' day, there appear to have been ordinary advocates and a more privileged group of advocates organised in 'guilds' and registered with a governor, *vicarius* or prefect. The latter group were much better placed to build and extend networks of friends and patrons. In theory, advocacy did not exempt a man from curial duties, but in practice most advocates in Libanius' letters, especially those attached to an official's tribunal, succeeded in freeing themselves completely of the council.⁵ But by far the most desirable career path in the fourth century led into some form of imperial service, what Gregory of Nyssa called the 'common disease' of the age.⁶ Government service was lucrative, prestigious and it secured a man and his descendants exemption from curial service. Nonetheless, 'love of the home town' (*philotimia*) could occasionally induce a former official (*honoratus*) to brush aside his legal exemption and to shoulder onerous civic duties, as Panolbius, Libanius' older uncle, did in 328 when he sponsored the Olympic Games at Antioch. Libanius' close friend Celsus 3 offers a similar

⁵ For Libanius' students as advocates, see Petit (1957a), 179–81. *Or.* 48.7 includes advocacy as a means of evading curial duties.

⁶ Gregory of Nyssa, *Ep.* 14.9.

example, since he served simultaneously in 364 as governor of Syria and also as Syriarch, the official charged with funding the games connected with the provincial assembly and normally drawn from among the wealthiest city councillors (cf. *ep.* 1399/B44).

Libanius began his study of rhetoric with Ulpianus, but after his teacher's death, other rhetoricians in Antioch seemed 'mere shadows of teachers' (*Or.* 1.8) and he took the unorthodox step of going back to a grammar teacher (*grammatistes*) with the principal goal of memorizing the works of Classical authors (*Or.* 1.8). This step would profoundly influence his prose style, which betrays an encyclopaedic knowledge of Classical literature, especially the orators, and which is more purely Attic than that of any of his contemporaries. He continued on this path until an incident occurred at the age of 20 that would affect him deeply. By his account, he was standing in a garden near his teacher's chair, engrossed in Aristophanes' *Acharnians*, when, from a blackening sky, a flash of lightning temporarily blinded him and set his head ringing (*Or.* 1.9; *ep.* 727/B146). His account of the incident is too vague to indicate whether he was struck by lightning, directly or indirectly, or, perhaps, suffered a cerebral haemorrhage, but there is no doubt that after this incident he suffered from severe migraine headaches that led to periodic breakdowns and spells of recuperation.

Now in his early 20s, he became entranced by talk of the glories of Athens. As he reports in the *Autobiography*, 'I think that I would have followed Odysseus' example and spurned even marriage with a goddess for a glimpse of the smoke of Athens' (*Or.* 1.12). His mother, however, wept at the proposed journey and Panolbius, his elder uncle and head of the family, respected his sister's distress and cast his veto. In the summer of 336, the family stood once again in the limelight when the younger uncle, Phasganius, staged the Olympic Games, as Panolbius had done in 328. By autumn, however, Panolbius was dead and opposition to the proposal of study in Athens gradually weakened. By winter 336/7, Libanius had prevailed over his mother and uncle, and set out for Athens where he was kidnapped off the dock and sequestered until he had sworn an oath to be the student of a sophist with whom he had had no intention of studying (*ep.* 1458/B159). He disliked his teacher and reacted strongly against the notorious unruliness of student life at Athens, though it had long been part of his fantasies, as he concedes in the *Autobiography*:

From my boyhood, gentlemen, I had heard tales of the fighting between the schools which took place in the heart of Athens: I had heard of the cudgels, the knives and stones they used and of the wounds they inflicted, of the

resultant court actions, the pleas of the defence and the verdicts upon the guilty, and of all those deeds of derring-do which students perform to raise the prestige of the teachers. I used to think them noble in their hardihood and no less justified than those who took up arms for their country: I used to pray heaven that it should be my lot too to distinguish myself so, to go hot-foot to the Peiraeus or Sunium or other ports to kidnap students at their landing, and them go off hot-foot once more to Corinth to stand trial for the kidnapping, give a string of parties, run through all I had, and then look to someone to make me a loan. (ch. 19, trans. Norman)

Libanius arrived in Athens at the age of 24, however, deeply serious about his studies and rather prim, even priggish, in his personal demeanour. He had no patience with schoolboy revels and passed four years there, a brilliant student but independent and aloof. He carried away from that experience the abiding conviction that Athens was overrated as a university town and that the stereotype was basically true: a stint in Athens taught a young man more about street-fighting than rhetoric (*Or.* 1.16–17, 48, 53, 215; *ep.* 715/B126).

The Early Teaching Years: Nicaea – Nicomedia – Constantinople

He passed the decade of the 340s in Asia Minor, teaching in Constantinople, Nicaea and Nicomedia. While travelling through the capital in 340, he met the grammarian Nicocles, teacher of the young prince Julian, who, allegedly to undermine a rival, offered to bring him 40 pupils if he would agree to open a school there (*Or.* 1.31). By the time Libanius had disentangled himself from obligations at Athens, the offer was gone, but his declamations were received enthusiastically and an imperial decree was produced enjoining him to stay in the city. His sudden rise, however, meant the decline of rivals, whose hostility he did not or could not adequately counter. Christian rioting in 342 provided a pretext for his enemies, who had him imprisoned and brought charges of magic and pederasty against him (Eunapius, *Lives of the Sophists* 495). The charges did not stick, but he was effectively driven from the capital and took refuge in Nicaea. His account of these events is not straightforward (*Or.* 1.44–47; *ep.* 557/N23), but the experience of being worsted by a cabal of hostile officials and envious rivals made a deep impression. It accounts in part for the antagonism he always felt towards Constantinople.

After two successful years in Nicaea (342–44), he was invited to Nicomedia, where he would spend the next five years, the happiest period of his life. There he had everything he could want: ‘health of body and peace of

mind, frequent declamations and excited applause at each of them, throngs of students and their progress, study by night and the sweat of labours by day, honour, kindness and affection' (*Or.* 1.51). His reputation continued to grow until, in 349 after delivery of a panegyric on the reigning emperors, Constantius II and Constans (*Or.* 59), his fame was great enough for him to be recalled to the capital by a decree of the emperor to take up the official chair of rhetoric.

The decree could not be eluded and he returned, wretched at the prospect of life in the capital and convinced that he 'had either to go drinking with the men of influence and waste the greater part of the day and night at the table, or else be regarded by them as an enemy and object of hostility' (*Or.* 1.75; *ep.* 399/B86). The taint of having been 'expelled' from the city, as detractors claimed, was expunged when his appointment was approved by the senate and his salary increased by the emperor. But he loathed the Great City (*Or.* 1.48, 52, 75–76, 215, 279; *ep.* 731/N87). An offer of a chair of rhetoric in Athens gave him an escape in 352/3, but he declined, already intent, it appears, on the prospect of returning to his native Antioch (*ep.* 16/N2).

The Return to Antioch

In the long summer vacation of 353, he went home for the first time in many years and explored plans for a return. He would marry Phasganius' daughter and, perhaps, succeed to the municipal chair of rhetoric held by his old teacher Zenobius. In the spring of 354, he visited Antioch again, allegedly for reasons of ill-health, but, in fact, he would never leave the city for the rest of his life. The plans of the previous year, however, had come undone. His fiancée was dead and whatever half-promises Zenobius had made were retracted. Moreover, the political situation was volatile. The city was rocked by disturbances due to food shortages and high grain prices, and the situation was exacerbated by the violent excesses of Gallus Caesar, who had the entire city council arrested, including Libanius' uncle, Phasganius. The Caesar's threat to execute councillors was retracted and they were soon released, but the city remained volatile until Gallus was lured westward to his death. Within a few months, Zenobius died and, with the aid of friends in the council, Libanius acceded to the municipal chair of rhetoric.

He was now entering the decade of his 40s and at the height of his rhetorical powers, but his situation was still precarious because his return to Antioch was unsanctioned and rivals were naturally hostile. These challenges made his early years after the return extremely productive. He worked tire-

lessly on two fronts, first, to secure imperial approval for his actions (e.g. *epp.* 409/N7, 435/B25, 438/B55), and second, to establish himself as the city's principal sophist by vanquishing all rivals (*epp.* 391/N4, 405/N6). He gave frequent public performances, including a performance of the *Antiochikos* (*Or.* 11) at the Olympia of 356, and he rapidly gathered a school of between 40 and 80 students. It was also at this period (spring 355) that Libanius began systematically to keep duplicate letter files.

Overwork during his first three years after the return home and personal losses beginning in 358 eventually took their toll. Four people who were very close to him died in quick succession. First, Aristaenetos 1, Libanius' most intimate friend, was killed when Nicomedia was levelled by an earthquake in August 358. That loss was soon followed in 359 by the deaths of three more people who were dear to him: Eusebios ix, a close family friend, his uncle Phasganius, head of the family and a dominant council member, and his own mother. These blows, coupled with fatigue, his recurring migraines and a tendency to valetudinarianism, due in part to temperament, in part to the model offered him by the second-century sophist, Aelius Aristides, sent him into a depression verging on a nervous breakdown. The political tensions of the years 359–60 added to his stress. An invasion by the Persians put the whole Eastern frontier on alert and was financially draining on all the surrounding provinces (*epp.* 143/N60, 625/B124). Further, many prominent Antiochenes, including friends of Libanius, were implicated in the treason trials held at Scythopolis in 359 (*Amm.* 19.12). These trials, like those staged in 371–72 under the emperor Valens, focused on divination used for treasonable purposes, but widened in scope to encompass a range of traditional pagan customs (*Amm.* 19.12.14). Libanius himself was not implicated, but the majority of the accused came from Antioch and Alexandria, and among them were many of his friends, including old schoolmates and his own pupils (*epp.* 37/N49, 112/N55, 361/N118). All prominent pagans were under suspicion in that charged atmosphere, and the problem became more acute after the news arrived of the Caesar Julian's open rebellion in February 360. Hellenes like Libanius needed to be tolerated by the Christian court in peacetime, but the prospect of civil war produced a toughening of attitudes. The Christian Praetorian Prefect Helpidius 4, doubtless incited by local rivals, arrived in Antioch in 360 and promptly slashed Libanius' salary. This insult was soon followed by another when the city council totally eliminated the stipends that had traditionally been paid to the assistant teachers of the municipal sophist (*Or.* 31). As war became inevitable in 361, extreme discretion in one's speech was required (*ep.* 661/B153).

The Julianic Revival

Constantius' sudden death on 3 November 361 totally altered the political landscape. Julian entered Constantinople unopposed and quickly made it clear that henceforth imperial favour would be extended to Hellenes, men of traditional education and culture with a proper reverence for the old gods. The admirers of traditional *paideia* among the Hellenic gentry were jubilant, for under Constantius they had faced stiff competition for advancement from well-connected Christians, from men with training in the rival studies of law and Latin (cf. *ep.* 533/B163), and finally from 'new men', particularly the notaries who were experts in shorthand and attached to the emperor's consistory.⁷ Libanius himself was elated at Julian's bloodless victory, yet hesitated to put himself forward. It is often assumed that Libanius' ascendancy under Julian was the natural result of a long and close relationship extending back for many years, but the situation was more complicated. Libanius had known the young prince in Nicomedia in 348 or 349 (*Or.* 18.12–15), but they had not met again. Libanius was occupied with his teaching in Constantinople in the early 350s, while Julian was revelling in the Neoplatonist philosophical circles at Pergamum and Ephesus, with occasional visits to Bithynia (*Or.* 18.17). One letter survives from that period (*ep.* 13/B23), while two or possibly three letters survive from the period after Julian was made Caesar and dispatched to Gaul (see introduction to B23). In winter 361/2, Libanius held back from meeting the new emperor for two reasons: first, his ingrained desire to avoid the appearance of sycophancy (*epp.* 578/B60, 716/N84), and second, because men implicated in Gallus Caesar's downfall had now become his kinsmen by marriage, and it was not clear how Julian would react (*epp.* 679/N79, 1404/B14). Pleading ill-health, he declined the request of the city council to participate in the embassy to Constantinople (*epp.* 697/B129, 716/N84). He would not even send a letter, which Julian noted and regretted (*Or.* 1.120). At the *adventus* ceremony at the Syrian border, Julian did not recognise Libanius, 'ravaged by time and illness' (*ep.* 736/N88), and a meeting between the two was initially blocked by jealous courtiers (*Or.* 1.121–23). Eventually, however, after a few weeks had passed, he was invited to deliver his *Address to Julian* (*Or.* 13) and from that meeting onwards, he became an intimate of the emperor.

The months from August 362 to March 363 when the army left on the Persian campaign were the high-water mark of Libanius' career. At last he

7 On the 'new men', see Heather (1994).

had an emperor whose respect for *paideia* equalled his own, and who aimed to promote to positions of authority men of traditional culture and religion. Libanius was never sympathetic to the excesses of the pagan revival or to the arcane Neoplatonist spirituality in which Julian had found salvation, but he supported the regime completely and was able to meet the emperor as an intellectual equal and to find common ground in their mutual love of the traditional Greek city and the *paideia* that was central to its spiritual life. Despite excellent relations with Julian, Libanius maintained his customary independence, refusing the offer of an honorary office and using his influence in the palace with conspicuous restraint, though he would combat for the rest of his life the accusation that he had misused that influence (*Orr.* 1.123; 2.8; 51.30; *ep.* 1154/N124). In late autumn/early winter, he sent to the emperor *Or.* 14 for Aristophanes of Corinth, a Hellene who had been victimised by some of the most hated members of Constantius' court. The speech met with ecstatic approval. On New Year's Day, he delivered *Or.* 12 to celebrate Julian's entry on the consulship of 363. Although he continued to fulfil his teaching duties, his role as a patron and 'broker' was greatly enhanced and he was besieged by requests for assistance (*epp.* 701/N82, 1360/B96). A host of new correspondents appear, usually Hellenes looking to demonstrate their culture and religion in an effort to secure political advancement (*epp.* 796/B156, 1338/B183).

Bad relations between emperor and city made Libanius' political role all the more visible. Predominantly Christian and loyal to Constantius' memory, Antioch responded with hostility and fear to Julian's attempt to make the old gods live again through lavish ceremonial and frequent blood sacrifices. Moreover, drought had produced grain shortages, high prices and the threat of famine in summer 362. Price controls quickly brought the emperor into conflict with influential city councillors. Nor did he share the people's love of the circus and theatre, and his Gallic troops gave offence as they staggered through the streets, gorged on wine and sacrificial meat. Libanius had quickly emerged as the chief intermediary between emperor and city, a position that gave him enormous influence, but the two parties were not bent on reconciliation. The Antiochenes mocked the emperor's philosopher's beard, prompting him to lampoon the city in turn with his satire called the 'Beard-Hater' (*Misopogon*).

In March 363, Julian departed Antioch, embittered at its ungrateful populace and vowing to make Tarsus his capital after successful completion of the Persian campaign. The embassy dispatched by the city failed to mollify him. Libanius composed two speeches to plead for the city (*Orr.* 15–16),

which he sent after the army while on the march, but these were probably never read by Julian. Within two months he was dead, or, as Libanius would always maintain, murdered. Libanius' initial impulse was to commit suicide, but that desire gave way to deep depression. This was the most dangerous period of his life. He was the target of assassination attempts under Jovian, and he was forced to witness the prosecutions and banishment of Julian's closest associates. Throughout the cities of the East, those who had worked vigorously for the pagan revival found themselves under attack in an anti-pagan reaction. This period came to its culmination in 365 with the usurpation of Procopius, a kinsman of Julian, whose failure also resulted in the deaths of pupils and associates of Libanius, like Hyperechius of Ancyra and Andronicus 3. The summer of 365 is also the period at which Libanius' letters cease, perhaps by accident, though it is more likely that Libanius considered it unwise to have in his possession any potentially incriminating evidence in his duplicate letter file.

The Reigns of Valens and Theodosius

Libanius never regained the prestige he had enjoyed under Julian. His association with the Apostate's regime made him suspect in the eyes of a Christian court, particularly under the suspicious and savage Valens (364–78). He himself remained steadfastly loyal to Julian's memory and he made it a personal mission to defend his reputation against detractors. In 364–65, he produced two major speeches, the *Monody on Julian* (*Or.* 17) and the *Funeral Oration* (*Or.* 18), and years later, when Valens was dead, he published *On Avenging Julian* (*Or.* 24). His restraint while he had influence and his inveterate practice of maintaining a wide network of connections, including people whom militant pagans found intolerable (*ep.* 1196/B161), helped him to weather the anti-pagan 'storm' and to maintain his position as a distinguished sophist, but his public role was much reduced. The death of Valens at the Battle of Hadrianople in 378 gave him new life at the age of 66. Indeed, it is astonishing that over half of his 64 extant orations were produced under the emperor Theodosius (378–95). In the 380s, he unleashed an extraordinary series of speeches of great importance for the religious and social history of the age: *For the Temples* (*Or.* 30), *On the Prisoners* (*Or.* 45), *On Protection Systems* (*Or.* 47), *For the City Councils* (*Or.* 47), *About Forced Labour* (*Or.* 50), *On the Statues* (*Or.* 19–23). Moreover, in 383 he was awarded an honorary title, perhaps a prefecture or quaestorship, as an outstanding exponent of literary culture (*Or.* 1.219). It is doubtful, however,

that any of those famous speeches was delivered before the emperor. It is more likely that they were performed before a small coterie of like-minded people, and, perhaps, later dispatched to a high official at court who might be sympathetic. Further, at the local level his later years were troubled by questions about his conduct both personal and professional. At the core of his troubles was resentment against his own curial immunity and the vigour with which he attempted keep his son, Cimon, and other close associates free of curial duties. This brought him into repeated conflict with the city's *principales* and high officials sympathetic to the council's point of view (cf. Norman [2001] 145). It is revealing that he should feel obliged to compose a speech *To Those Who Called Him Tiresome* (*Or.* 2) and *Against the Critics of his Educational System* (*Or.* 62). Nor did he respond with the same grace that had characterised his social relations in his younger days. Self-righteous and vain, he was quick to perceive a slight and constantly at odds, not only with governors, but even with the Hellenic gentry who had once admired him deeply. The charm for which he had been famous in youth and middle age (cf. Eunapius, *Lives of the Sophists* 495–96) seemed to desert him in the last years of his long life. The death of his illegitimate son Cimon in 390 nearly broke him. His duplicate letter files cease in summer 393 and it is presumed that he died in that year.

LATE ROMAN GOVERNMENT IN THE GREEK EAST⁸

A large proportion of the letters in this volume involve the entry of Greek provincial aristocrats into government service or the manipulation of the administration for personal advantage. To understand the 'networking' and the patterns of patronage observable in the letters, it is necessary to understand the structure and workings of late Roman administration in the Greek East, or at least those aspects of it that play a role in the letters.

The Imperial Court

At the pinnacle of society and government stood the emperor and empress, surrounded by their court. In the fourth century, the court was peripatetic and migrated as reasons of state demanded, whether to meet external threats

⁸ In English, the fundamental discussion of the material presented here remains Jones, *LRE*, chapters 11 ('The Government'), 321–65, 12 ('The Administration'), 366–410, and 16 ('The Civil Service'), 563–606. For an excellent, briefer treatment of 'Emperors, Government, and Bureaucracy', see Kelly (1998).

(Persians, Germans, Danubian tribes) or internal threats (potential usurpers), or to inspect conditions in the provinces. When an emperor moved, the entire central government moved, and since access to the court was critical for men in pursuit of high office, the court's movements had a major impact on the process of politics. It was certainly a disadvantage for Libanius, for example, that the court was in the West for much of the 350s, due to the attempted usurpations of Vetricianus in 350, Magnentius in 351–53 and Silvanus in 355. The court was resident in Milan in 355–56, went to Rome for Constantius' Vicennalia celebration in spring 357, and then travelled to Sirmium in Pannonia from summer 357 until 359, while the emperor campaigned against tribes on the Danube, before returning to Constantinople in 360 and moving on to Antioch for winter 360–61.

Collectively, the court was an 'Order of Imperial Companions' (*comitatus*), to which were admitted those to whom the emperor had awarded the rank of 'companion' (sing. *comes*, plur. *comites*, English 'Count'). All government service was organised as military service (*militia*) and divided into three branches: 1) the *militia palatina* composed of palatine officials (*palatini*), so called because they possessed a right of access to the palace (*palatium*); 2) the *militia officialis*, the civilian officials in charge of all levels of provincial administration; and 3) the *militia armata* or armed services. In the fourth century, military service and civilian government service were kept strictly separate, yet both soldiers and civilian officials wore a wide leather belt (Greek *zone*, Lat. *cingulum*) indicating to the discerning eye precisely how the wearer stood in the complex hierarchy of grades, ranks, titles, honours, privileges and perquisites that affected all imperial servants. Libanius' correspondents tend to occupy the higher civilian offices, both at court and in the Eastern provinces, or else they belong to the most prominent families among the local provincial aristocracies. The structure of the army therefore need not concern us here.

At court there were four principal palatine ministers, the most important of whom was the *magister officiorum* or Master of Offices, a kind of 'Chief of Staff' with wide-ranging administrative and disciplinary authority over palatine departments (*officia*). He was a pivotal figure at court, the principal gatekeeper (cf. Amm. 28.6.8) controlling access to the emperor and to the consistory, the emperor's advisory body. It was the Master of Offices who received foreign embassies and controlled their admission to the imperial presence. He also commanded the imperial bodyguards (*scholae palatinae*) in the palace, though not on the battlefield. His control of access to the emperor and high palatine officials naturally gave him great powers of

patronage. Libanius wrote to three Masters of Offices between 355 and 365: Musonius 1 (356–57), with whom he had no influence, but to whom he wrote out of desperation to have his move to Antioch confirmed; Florentius 3 (355, 359–61), who proved very obliging to him; and Anatolius 5 (360–63), Julian's *magister libellorum* in Gaul who then became Master of Offices. Libanius met him in Antioch in 362 and thus wrote to him only once (*ep.* 739/B43).

The Masters of Offices had supervision of the three secretarial departments (*scrinia*) that conducted the emperor's correspondence, *memoria*, *epistulae* and *libelli*, each of which had a *magister* as supervisor. How the tasks among the three departments differed is not completely clear from our sources, but they handled legal documents, requests, petitions, official reports and memoranda. There was also a *magister epistularum graecarum* or Master of Greek Letters, charged with translating the emperor's pronouncements into good Greek. Not surprisingly, we find several of Libanius' old schoolmates and pupils employed in the correspondence bureaus of the palace (*epp.* 218/B3, 559/B31).

The Master of Offices supervised the public post and commanded the important corps of imperial couriers (*agentes in rebus*), who operated the public post (*cursus publicus*), undertook annual tours of inspection in the provinces and were often assigned to gather sensitive information. Their conspicuous presence at the treason trials that marred Constantius II's reign explains why they were often feared and hated (*Or.* 2.58), but Libanius wrote many letters of intercession for people enrolled among the couriers (*epp.* 362/B64, 604/B33). Moreover, the couriers, although on official business, made excellent private letter-carriers, like Libanius' good friend Clematius 2, who travelled to court in Milan in winter 355/6 carrying eleven letters for him.

The official with primary responsibility for the drafting and precise wording of imperial legislation was the *quaestor sacri palatii* or Quaestor of the Sacred Palace. None figures in Libanius' correspondence of 355–65, perhaps due to historical accident, or perhaps because Constantius appointed Westerners who were Latin speakers and skilled in Roman law.

The two chief finance ministers at court were the *comes sacrarum largitionum* (CSL) or Count of Sacred Largesses and the *comes rei privatae* (CRP) or Count of Private Properties. The former was responsible for the empire's money system, supervising the mining of precious metals and the minting of the coinage with which the emperor paid his troops. Constantius II denied the Caesar Julian a CSL in Gaul precisely to prevent him being

able to win over the troops through lavish donatives. In contrast, the Count of Private Properties was charged with the administration of all imperial estates, that is, the emperor's private property. He collected rents and supervised all property transfers, both from the emperor as gifts to loyal subjects or to the emperor from confiscation or inheritance. Under Constantine and his sons, many formally civic or temple properties became imperial properties, which often then passed into private hands, usually those of high officials and courtiers. Libanius' letters allude to many lawsuits over disputed properties. The most notorious concern the return of 'stolen' temple property (*epp.* 1364/N105, 724/B182), but many concern secular properties to which a city council attempts to lay claim in order to tap its revenues for the city (*epp.* 620/B13, 828).

The emperor's advisory body was called the consistory (*consistorium*), from those who 'sat with' the emperor. It was composed of the Praetorian Prefect of the Prefecture where the court found itself, the four chief civilian ministers (the Master of Offices, the Quaestor of the Sacred Palace, the Count of Sacred Largesses and the Count of Private Properties), the principal army officers at court, and former and titular holders of *ex officio* seats. Men without qualifying office could be enrolled at the emperor's discretion, for example, the highest provincial officials who might be temporarily at court. The consistory was the epicentre of political life in the empire. Here the emperor, in consultation with his advisors, made all political appointments and debated important political decisions.

A corps of notaries (*notarii*) trained in shorthand was attached to the consistory to record the discussions held there and to preserve a record of what had been decided. The head of the corps (*primicerius notariorum*) was not equal in rank to the other great palatine ministers, but the nature of the job gave the notaries access to the court's most powerful men, including the emperor. Constantius II, in particular, valued the notaries highly and came to use them for a range of important assignments well beyond their central role in the consistory. They were 'special agents' of the emperor, highly trusted and highly visible, sometimes rising to the highest civilian offices. Libanius regards the promotion of shorthand by Constantius II as directly responsible for the decline in the prestige of eloquence:

All arts that are favoured by the emperors lead their students to influence and simultaneously bring fortune to their teachers: the services are held to be great, and the rewards are great. However, when any profession, even though intrinsically good, is despised by the ruling emperor, it loses its prestige... No one is so out of touch with recent developments or so maliciously

delighted as to venture to assert that our profession has not plumbed the depths of degradation. For in cases where people, who have undergone the laborious training for the acquisition of learning, either go the whole hog and direct their sons to shorthand-writing, regardless of intellectual ability, or else have regard for both alike, for rhetoric as good and shorthand-writing as prestigious, what greater proof yet do you need of the insults to which education is subjected? (*Or.* 31.26–28, trans. Norman)

Libanius' account here is of course deeply partisan, the product of his conviction that social and political advancement should be reserved exclusively for those who have been groomed by the traditional *paideia* that he himself dispensed. In his view, no other cultural formation is acceptable in the governing class and he never relents in his resentment against Constantius for promoting to the highest civilian offices 'new men' of humble birth who possessed skill in shorthand, but lacked traditional *paideia*. Datianus 1, the most powerful courtier known from Constantius' court, came up through the ranks of the notaries, as did Helpidius 4, Praetorian Prefect of the East in 360–61. On the other hand, Libanius' best connection at court was through a notary, his cousin Spectatus 1. The conspicuous influence of notaries declined after the death of Constantius II.

The entire staff of the imperial court numbered approximately 3,000 people, to which we must add 3,000 household troops, yielding a figure of around 6,000 persons attached to the *comitatus*. It has been estimated that there were at this period some 30–35,000 men employed in the civil service as a whole, as opposed to some 300 career civil servants, supported by staffs drawn from the army and freedmen, under the emperor Caracalla in the early third century. This huge increase was due to the expansion of the government, particularly the doubling of the number of provinces, initiated by Diocletian and continued by Constantine and his sons.

Provincial Administration

Most of the government was naturally stationed in the provinces of the empire, which was in the mid-fourth century divided into four regional prefectures: 1) the East (Oriens), 2) Illyricum, 3) Italy and Africa, and 4) Gaul, including Spain and Britain. The four Praetorian Prefects (PPO) who governed these prefectures were the highest civilian officials in the empire. Normally, a Praetorian Prefect would attend the emperor at court in his own Prefecture, and since emperors in the fourth century frequently (though not in the 350s) resided at Antioch, it became *de facto* the Praetorian Prefect's

headquarters, until this was transferred to Constantinople under the emperor Theodosius. Consequently, Libanius seldom wrote to Eastern Prefects, since he enjoyed personal access at the palace, if he was on good relations with the Prefect. Libanius never writes to Prefects of Italy or Gaul, who were Westerners and Latin speakers, but he frequently writes to Anatolius 3, Prefect of Illyricum (357–60) and arguably Libanius' most important patron in the late 350s.

The Praetorian Prefect had general administrative control over all the provinces in his region of jurisdiction. He was, along with the emperor, a supreme court of appeal, and doubtless spent much of his time acting as an appeals judge. He was the normal channel by which emperors and subjects communicated about the law. Governors' queries were frequently directed to him and a large proportion of imperial legislation was forwarded by the emperor to a Prefect, who then disseminated copies to his provincial governors. The Prefect prepared the annual indiction, which was in effect the imperial budget, and he was responsible for collection of the principal land tax, assessed in kind (*annona*), which provided the bulk of the pay for the civil service and army. His powers of patronage were vast, and we should assume that Prefects routinely forwarded to the emperor recommendations for potential officials, especially provincial governors.

The regional Prefectures were subdivided into a number of dioceses, each of which was governed by a *vicarius*, so named because he acted 'in place of' (*vicis agens*) the Prefect. At mid-century, the Eastern Prefecture was divided into the following dioceses (with capitals): Oriens (Antioch), Asia (Ephesus), Pontus (Caesarea), Thrace (Heraclea), Macedonia (Thessalonica), and, briefly under Constantius II, Pietas (Nicomedia). Normally, the Prefect took the place of a *vicarius* in his own diocese, but that convention was not observed in the East. Antioch was headquarters not only to the Praetorian Prefect of the East, but also to the *comes Orientis* or Count of the East, the special name given to the *vicarius* in the diocese of Oriens, deriving historically from the fact that he had a military role beyond what was normative in more peaceful regions. It is not easy to determine the duties of *vicarii* or what the precise chain of command was from Praetorian Prefect down to regional governor. The sources show Prefects and governors interacting without any intermediary, and cases in which governors would interact directly with an emperor. In many situations, jurisdiction was unclear. The *vicarii* certainly acted as courts of appeal, though appeal against their verdict could be made to a Praetorian Prefect or the emperor. What supervisory powers they had over provincial governors are unclear.

Provincial governors were the principal administrators in their provinces, with wide-ranging administrative, legal and financial duties. The governor's rank and status depended on which province he administered, but Libanius never alludes to such distinctions. In Latin sources, governors are often referred to simply as 'judges' (*iudices*), which points to the task occupying most of their time. They also supervised collection of taxes, whether in coin or kind, oversaw public works projects, and reviewed administration in the cities. Governorships were normally awarded to the descendants of men who had held high offices (*archai*) conferring senatorial rank, as well as the most influential members of a city council. There was clearly much pressure on these positions, since imperial service, apart from being prestigious and lucrative, was regarded as the best way to cultivate a network of patrons and friends who could secure and protect a family's social position. Consequently, the turnover was rapid and governors normally stayed only one or, at most, two years in office. By law, one could not serve as governor of one's home province, but exceptions are found, for example, Gaianus 6, a native of Tyre who was governor of Phoenicia in 362–63, or Celsus 3, a native of Antioch and governor of Syria in 363–64. The normal pattern was for governors to serve in provinces near or adjacent to their home province. A governorship could be a stepping stone to higher office, but in general Libanius' friends and pupils held perhaps one or two governorships and rose no higher.

Rome and Constantinople

Rome and Constantinople stood outside the provincial network sketched above. In 359, the emperor Constantius II embarked on a plan to make Constantinople a genuine equal of Rome. He chose as the chief architect of this change the philosopher Themistius, who was responsible for transforming the senate from a body of 300 members to a senatorial order composed of 2000 members (Themistius, *Or.* 34.13). In addition, the old Proconsul of Constantinople was replaced by a Prefect of the City of Constantinople (*praefectus urbis Constantinopolitanae* or PUC) on the model of the Prefect of the City of Rome (PUR). The growth of the senate and the political role of the PUC are both prominent themes in the present volume (*epp.* 251/B66, 252/B84, 265/B67, 40/B82).

PRESERVATION AND SURVIVAL OF LIBANIUS' LETTERS

Libanius' 1544 letters, written over a total of fifteen years (355–65, 388–93), form the largest letter collection to survive from antiquity, a letter every three days on average. The current collection clearly derives from the duplicate copies Libanius himself kept of the letters he dispatched. Normally he would dictate a letter to a scribe, who would then make a second copy on papyrus, and it was presumably this clean copy that was rolled, sealed with wax, and sent off by a trusted messenger. The first copy will have been put in a duplicates file. It cannot be known for certain why the surviving collection exists in two chronologically distinct groupings, 355–65 and 388–93. Libanius obviously corresponded both prior to 355 and after 365 when the duplicate files cease. That much is clear from a few gleanings from other years (350–53 and 365–88), preserved at random and inserted at the beginning of the corpus (*epp.* 1–18). Moreover, twice in the reign of Valens (364–78) he barely escaped the charge of treason due to his correspondence, but those letters had been discovered in the files of recipients who were under investigation (*Or.* 1.175, 177). Even after Valens was dead, he waited a decade before resuming his practice of keeping duplicates of his letters (summer 388–summer 393). In addition, he occasionally alludes to letters that have apparently not been retained in duplicate, even in years when the collection is very full (cf. *ep.* 1264/N133). The most likely hypothesis for the 23-year gap is that he regarded it as politically injudicious to keep records under hostile emperors.

The impetus for the inception and preservation of Libanius' huge letter collection lies in Greek attitudes towards the cultural and social role of letters. Greek theory had long held that a letter is to be regarded as a literary gift from one man of culture to another. Composed in a strictly classicizing Greek with proper attention to the exacting rules of the genre, the letter should be a work of art that both delights and confers honour on sender and recipient alike. It is an important vehicle of friendship (*philia*) among men who share a common cultural orientation derived from the shared *paideia* of their early years. And it is precisely this common culture, formed by a shared *paideia*, that produced a remarkable homogeneity of outlook in the governing classes and allowed men to pursue friendships, through letters, with people of quite different social, ethnic and geographical backgrounds.

The receipt of a letter from a man of letters such as Libanius could be a minor literary event. As Michael Trapp rightly points out, Libanius 'was in the habit of summoning his friends to read aloud and discuss letters

received, and must have taken it that the same would be done with his own'.⁹ If a letter arrived and was delivered in a public place, due note was taken of who received a letter and who did not. For example, in congratulating Themistius on adlection to the senate in 355, Libanius can complain that he had received no letter from Themistius, but the Prefect Strategius had and Libanius had read that one (*ep.* 434/N12). In 362, Entrechius is said to be eager to receive letters from Libanius, since 'in them he will get everlasting fame' (*ep.* 773.5). Entrechius intends to read aloud his letter from the distinguished sophist to a coterie of like-minded connoisseurs who will discuss its diction, turns of phrase, use of proverbs, and literary allusions. Letters of this sort are thus 'published' by semi-public recitation and discussion, and they produce 'fame', at least among the *literati*, for those with the skill to compose them elegantly and those esteemed highly enough to receive them. Libanius happened to be at court waiting for a poet to perform when a letter from Maximus 19 arrived: 'After reading your letter and admiring it, I got in ahead of the poet and used the gathering to read out the letter, and there was no one who could stand to listen in silence!' (*ep.* 779/B107). To correspond with powerful political figures is itself a mark of influence and is duly noted, as Libanius reveals in explaining to Aristaenetus how he happened to have a letter that Aristaenetus had written to the Praetorian Prefect Strategius Musonianus:

Listen to how what you wrote to him came into my hands. He returned from Chalcedon, and I – this is my custom – greeted him before the city. As soon as he embraced me, he said that he would give me the letter that had come to him from you. These remarks were spoken with joy, conveying honour on you and me, and Nebridius [*comes Orientis*, 354–58] was riding with him and heard them. When I came home, I read the letter he had given me...I then praised it and he was pleased. (*ep.* 561/B173)

The semi-public nature of these letters reveals why so little controversial material is included in them. Only rarely does Libanius make politically imprudent remarks and the reason is obvious. For example, criticisms that he had made against the Prefect Strategius in letters to Andronicus 3 and the philosopher Themistius were repeated in some form in Constantinople and these comments eventually made their way back to Antioch, which naturally created tension between Libanius and the powerful Prefect (cf. *epp.* 476/N16, 477/N17). Normally, sensitive information was reported orally by a trusted letter-carrier.

⁹ Trapp (2003), 17.

Men of letters routinely kept copy-books of letters they had written and received and Libanius was recognised as a master of the art in his own lifetime (Eunapius, *Lives of the Sophists* 496). Thus, it is hardly surprising that he kept duplicate files of his letters, but whether he himself planned to publish them cannot be known. Otto Seeck (*BLZG* 23) advanced the idea that Libanius published the letters from 355–61 (*epp.* 19–607) in honour of Julian's advance from Caesar to Augustus, but as Richard Foerster (vol. 9, pp. 49–52) pointed out, Libanius would surely then have collected the letters to Julian at the beginning of the edition, which is not the case. Moreover, in 364 Aristophanes of Corinth had to ask Libanius for copies of the letters he had written to Julian (*ep.* 1264/N133), which implies that they were not available in a published edition. If Libanius had intended to publish his letters, it is doubtful, in my view, that he would have chosen the arrangement that has come down to us in the manuscript tradition. The structure and order of the corpus would be more carefully worked out than is currently the case. Symmachus and Ambrose, for example, arranged their letters in ten books on the famous model of Pliny the Younger, but there was no comparably illustrious model in the Greek East and each writer had to devise his own structure. Gregory of Nazianzus offers an instructive example. At the request of a nephew, Nicobulus, Gregory published in the 380s an edition of his selected letters, which included 1) four 'programmatic letters' to Nicobulus on epistolography, 2) a selection of St Basil's letters to himself, as a tribute to Basil, 3) selected letters of his own to Basil, and 4) selected letters by himself to other correspondents. This ancient edition became the nucleus of the more extensive modern collection.¹⁰

Seeck (*BLZG* 23) rightly pointed out that *epp.* 19–607 are divided into six books in the medieval manuscript tradition and that these books were undoubtedly based on six batches of duplicate files kept by Libanius. The current structure of the corpus, however, suggests that an unknown literary executor or admirer, not Libanius himself, actually published the letter collection after Libanius' death. The executor used six batches of duplicate files from the archives, plus assorted gleanings from other years (350–53 and 365–88), setting the gleanings at the beginning of the corpus (*epp.* 1–18) and then setting out the six batches of files, which became six books in the manuscript tradition:

Book 1 (*epp.* 19–96), from summer 358 to winter 359/60

Book 2 (*epp.* 97–202), from winter 359/60 to spring 360

10 Saint Grégoire de Nazianze, *Lettres*, ed. P. Gailly, vol. 1, pp. xxi–xxiii.

- Book 3 (*epp.* 203–310), from spring 360 to spring 361
- Book 4 (*epp.* 311–389), from summer 357 to winter 358/9
- Book 5 (*epp.* 390–493), from spring 355 to spring 356
- Book 6 (*epp.* 494–607), from summer 356 to summer 357

He then appended these further batches:

- Epp.* 615–839, from 361 to 363
- Epp.* 840–1112, from 388–393
- Epp.* 1113–1341, from 363 to 365 (in great disorder)
- Epp.* 1342–1461, from 363
- Epp.* 1462–1542, from 365

Certain groupings, for example, the six batches from 355–61, *epp.* 1342–1461 from 363 and *epp.* 1462–1542 from 365, each represent a file that the executor located and inserted into his published edition. Similarly, an eighteen-month gap between *epp.* 914 and 915 suggests that an entire file was lost. Norman (1992) vol. 1, p. 41, saw the hand of Libanius himself in the arrangement of the six ‘books’, arguing that comparison of *epp.* 391 and 405 with *Or.* 1.90ff. reveals that Libanius had consulted his letter collection when composing the *Autobiography*. He hypothesised further that Libanius may intentionally have transposed the chronology of the files in order to begin with letters written when he was firmly established as the city’s sophist. The first letter in Books 1–6, *ep.* 19, is a fine example of a sophist’s *parrhesia* before a high Roman official. Norman may be correct here, but what is more striking about the corpus as a whole is the absence of any clear ordering principle. The executor’s aim in publishing the corpus was primarily stylistic and aesthetic. These letters were to serve as epistolary models for others to admire and imitate, and he made little effort to preserve the chronological order of the batches of files or to winnow the corpus. He included, for example, letters that amounted to no more than one brief sentence (*epp.* 609, 611, 612–14).

Although a letter has on occasion become displaced chronologically and the batch of letters from 363–65 (*epp.* 1113–1341) is in total disarray, in general the letters within individual batches follow in reliable chronological order. Consequently, it is possible to date the letters and determine their destination with a surprising degree of precision. A great many of Libanius’ letters were carried as letters of introduction by travellers who hoped to secure comfortable lodgings on their journey, as we see in this amusing letter to a former pupil in Ancyra:

Alas, alas, how often did you shake your head and say to yourself in solitude or at night, ‘I’m neglected! I’m scorned! Everything is changed!’ The proof of this for you was the fact that a crowd of people were racing past you on their way to Thrace [Constantinople], but no letter either short or long reached you from me. Many people asked me, but I didn’t give one to anybody, and I’ll tell you the reason. I knew that everybody would want to lodge with you and live it up, and, if you didn’t receive them, you’d give the appearance of being in the wrong, whereas, if you sat there and entertained ‘more men than the leaves’,¹¹ it would be annoying... At the same time, I knew that people are happy to eat, but they don’t know how to remember hospitality, rather they think it manly if they speak ill of those who took them in. (*ep.* 704/B179)

Occasionally, we can track a traveller’s itinerary because a group of letters to well-known correspondents are preserved in a consecutive series in the manuscripts and they conform to an obvious itinerary. For example, Libanius’ young kinsman, Iamblichus 2, set out on an overland journey from Antioch to Rome in spring 357, armed with nine letters of introduction to well-known correspondents strung out along his route. He travelled north to Tarsus (*ep.* 569 to Hierocles 3), then to Ancyra (570 to Maximus xii), to Nicomedia (571/N24 to Aristaenetos 1), to Constantinople (572 to Gymnasium 2, 573 to Silanus 1, 575 to Themistius 1), to Sirmium (574/B17 to Anatolius 3), and onward to the court in Italy (576 to Barbatio, 577 to Olympius 5 and Jovinus 1).¹² Letoius i made the same journey to Rome in spring 357 with ten letters of introduction (*epp.* 550–59) for friends and acquaintances stretching from Nicomedia to Rome. Otto Seeck (*BLZG*), in addition to working out the chronology of the corpus, noted the identity of the letter-carrier and his itinerary, if these could be determined from the internal evidence of the letters and from a letter’s position within a series. The date, destination and letter-carrier are indicated in parentheses before the translation of a letter in this volume whenever this information can be known.

To Byzantine readers, Libanius was considered a ‘Second Demosthenes’, and his works were frequently copied. The letter collection or portions of it exist in over 250 manuscripts, of which the three best date from the eleventh century: Vaticanus gr. 83 (V), the most complete of the three, Vaticanus gr. 85 (Va), and Vossianus Leidensis gr. 77 (Vo). For a detailed discussion of their quality and contents, see Norman (1992) vol. 1, pp. 35–43.

¹¹ *Iliad* 6.146–50.

¹² These letters were all retained in Libanius’ duplicate files, but Iamblichus apparently did not complete the journey to Italy, cf. introduction to *ep.* 385/B20.



SELECTED LETTERS OF LIBANIUS



I. LETTERS FOR FAMILY MEMBERS

1. TO ANTIOCHUS¹

(Sent to ?Phoenicia, 356/7) F544 W458

B1–4, together with *ep.* 217/N71 from 360, concern the Syriarchate of an unnamed cousin of Libanius. Most of what we know of the Syriarchy in the fourth century derives from Libanius' letters and the dossier of this cousin is especially informative. Like Libanius' uncles Panolbius and Phasganius, this cousin had in the past (*palai*) organised the quadrennial Olympic Games at Antioch, which were modelled on the Olympic Games at Elis and still popular in the fourth century. This Antiochene festival was thus Hellenic in origin and dedicated to Olympian Zeus. In 356, the cousin embarked on a new liturgy, the office of the Syriarch, who presided over the provincial assembly (*synodos*) of Syria, originally founded for the orchestration of the imperial cult. The Syriarch was primarily responsible for the production of entertainments, especially at the annual festival coinciding with the convocation of the provincial assembly. Unlike the Olympic Games, this festival was Roman in origin and dedicated to the reigning emperor, who regulated the scope of the entertainments and assisted with financial subventions. B2, for example, mentions the necessity of securing the emperor's 'nod', which alludes to the subvention, and perhaps to imperial approval of the entertainment programme as well. The Syriarch staged various entertainments, including theatrical shows and chariot races, but the great crowd pleaser was the wild beast chases held at the annual festival. These spectacles, in which professional beast fighters hunted down and fought wild animals, were expensive and logistically complicated to prepare, since animals and fighters often had to be sought from neighbouring provinces. Competition among provinces to acquire first-rate animals and fighters was very keen. B1 is one among many letters written by Libanius on behalf of friends responsible for staging beast fights and in need of spirited, savage animals. On the Olympic Games and the Syriarchy in the fourth century, see Downey (1939) and Liebeschuetz (1972), 136–44. Liebeschuetz (1959b) examines in detail the evidence of Libanius' letters for the office of the Syriarch.

¹ Antiochus iii is kinsman by marriage to Libanius.

1. My cousin has in the past organised the games for Olympian Zeus, but now he has embarked on a civic duty, most aspects of which he understands, but his great preoccupation is the contests of men against wild beasts. 2. We need *wild* beasts, not ones that are half-asleep and inspire confidence in those who face them, but ones that will require much skill from the man who intends not to be caught. That's the sort of bears your mountains nurture, ones dangerous to stalk and kill. It's the survival of the dangerous ones that provides pleasure for the audience.² While our territory is rich in game, *you* have many skilful hunters, who are, I believe, the favourites of Artemis. 3. Make his civic duty a brilliant one for us by the fierceness of the bears, and by one and the same action free your farmers from fear while you instil fear in our beast fighters, and be zealous on behalf of your kinsmen. 4. It were fitting that a letter about these matters reach you from me, and for your good sister, a letter from the excellent Bassiana.³

2. TO SPECTATUS

(Sent to court in Milan, 356/7) F545 W459

In B2 Libanius requests three favours of his cousin Spectatus 1, a notary (*notarius*) at court. The chief interest of this brief note is Libanius' stress on the importance of successfully promoting their friends' interests so that their network of influence does not appear weaker than other networks. On Spectatus, see the introduction to B5.

1. Three things ought to come about through you: one for a kinsman, one for an advocate and one for a sophist. 2. On the one hand, the civic duty to which our cousin⁴ has been summoned ought to be confirmed by a 'nod' from the emperor, while a letter needs to go to Sabinus⁵ conferring a higher rank, so that he is not left behind by those to whom he is superior in learning. That way he won't seem to be employing friends weaker than other people. 3. Neither

2 Cf. *ep.* 1400/N108, requesting animals for the Syriarch, Celsus 3 in 363: '...the person who puts up the money earns praise when the hunters come in well-trained and the animals get the better of them despite that. For a bear to be beaten or a panther conquered is a criticism of the sponsor of the show.'

3 Spectatus' mother and Libanius' aunt.

4 The unnamed cousin of B1, who needs an imperial subvention to reduce his own costs in staging the wild beast hunts.

5 Sabinus 5, apparently an advocate at the bar of the Prefect of the East in 356. He became governor of Syria in 358–59 through the patronage of Anatolius 3, Prefect of Illyricum, but retired under a cloud, was prosecuted and refused to serve in office again. His sons were studying with Libanius in 364.

is it tolerable for me nor noble for you that his case offer any grounds for criticism of you and me. 4. Let the third one receive his salary, that the profit from this may cause his enemies to choke with rage!⁶

3. TO EUSEBIUS

(Sent to court, probably in Edessa, summer 360) F218 W218

By 360 Libanius' cousin mentioned in B1–2 had spent ruinous sums on his Syriarchy and wished to put an end to it. Custom dictated that his final show should be the most elaborate (*ep.* 217/N71), and he had already in summer 360 invited the cities to the festival when an imperial order arrived forbidding slaughter of the animals he had assembled. The court was at that moment en route to Antioch and Constantius' officials wanted the animals to be spared for the emperor's hunt. The unfortunate Syriarch was to keep them fed and in trim for the emperor, and he was not to use them in the festival. Despite exorbitant expenditures, he would, unless the order was rescinded, depart his office ingloriously amidst the hoots and catcalls of a disappointed public. In B3–4 Libanius intervenes with two officials, Eusebius 15/xii, a former pupil and the chancellery official who had composed the imperial order, and Florentius 3, *magister officiorum* at court and the man primarily responsible for the imperial order, in an effort to secure permission that some of the animals be employed in the festival. We do not know how this affair ended.

1. 'Let the wild beasts be spared and let no one slaughter them! Let someone offer the spectacle except for *that* part! The master is not to have control over his own possessions!' 2. It's very easy to order these things and things yet stranger than these, but examine whether this lapse into such absurdity is what you intended and conforms to the hopes you inspired.⁷ One ought not to be proud of doing anything whatsoever, but of doing what is appropriate. 3. Consider what the present situation is like. Out of madness, my cousin conceived a desire for this truly onerous public service and Demosthenes will vote that I've rightly called 'madness' the love of honour beyond one's capacity.⁸ 4. In addition to emptying his own house of wealth, he also tapped

6 The sophist is Libanius himself, whose imperial salary had been stopped when he left his teaching post in Constantinople and transferred to Antioch without imperial approval. On Libanius' salaries, see Kaster (1983).

7 Libanius allows himself this blunt language because he is dealing with a former pupil, who had inspired 'hopes' when he secured a position at court, thus opening another avenue of influence for Libanius.

8 Demosthenes, *Or.* 21.69, where the orator alludes to his own ambition or 'love of honour' (φιλοτιμία) in serving as *choregos*, whose task it was to fund the training and equipping of a

considerable resources from many friends, gathering all sorts of wild beasts and beast fighters from everywhere. 5. Further, it's the mark of a prudent man not to extend the expenditure over such a long time and I often counselled this. But since he was unwilling to yield to me, he's yielding to Necessity and he's inviting the cities in order to impose a limit on spending, but you won't allow this. 6. So tell me, what's he going to do? Will he call off the assembly by announcing that people are to remain in the country and wait for winter?⁹ What could be more embarrassing or more costly? For what crime will he endure that punishment? 7. Or will he be obliged to invite the cities and do the rest of it, but then pray over the bears and order no one to wound them even with a judge's staff? What sort of pleasure is that? How is that not laughable? Where is that worthy of the victory crown? Who could endure the hooting and hissing? When they ask for some stabbing, what will he say? That he wouldn't like it? Or that they ask the fellow who prevented it? The one isn't noble for you nor the other for him. 8. So, come now, my friend, heal the wound and don't ill-treat men who are your companions or a city in which you took your share of education.¹⁰ Those wild beasts that are fierce and unstoppable have been given to the emperor as a gift and they await his worthy arrows, but the rest, though unworthy of his eyes, would bring pleasure to the people. 9. So write better things and don't be the stake that betrays the vine. You were expected by others too to dispel evil in its course.

4. TO FLORENTIUS¹¹

(Sent to court, probably in Edessa, summer 360) F219 W220

1. You know the city, the city's customs, her civic duties, and the measure of each, which one is easy and which requires the wealth of Croesus,¹² and that

tragic chorus at the festival of Dionysus. *Philotimia*, a highly charged concept for Libanius, is the praiseworthy ambition that propelled civic notables in the Roman empire to spend heavily in acts of public benefaction. The decline of civic benefaction in the fourth century is a constant theme of Libanius, cf. the idealised vision of a city council at *Or.* 11.133–38. Here he casts his cousin as a model decurion, who is unfortunately risking financial ruin due to *philotimia*.

9 The beast fight would be staged at the annual festival marking convocation of the 17 cities of the *koinon* of Syria. Jones (1971), 531, lists the following members of the *zouón*: Antioch, Seleucia, Laodicea, Gabala, Paltus, Beroea, Chalcis, Anasartha, Gabbula, Apamea, Epiphaneia, Arethusa, Larissa, Mariamne, Balanea, Raphanea, Seleucia ad Belum.

10 Those who studied together are, in Libanius' thought, forever 'companions' (ἐταῖροι) and owe one another particular loyalty.

11 Florentius 3, *magister officiorum* (359–61). B35–41 all concern Florentius.

12 King of Lydia famed for his wealth, cf. Herodotus 1.29ff.

each man ought reasonably to pray with and to assist those who undertake the greatest civic duties. Well, it's my role to pray, since I don't have power, but it has fallen to you to help with concrete actions. 2. My cousin has been spending money beyond all measure for a very long time, and he has diminished his own house so that there is no longer anything left in it,¹³ and although he wants to, he cannot remain in that office.¹⁴ 3. So with Necessity driving him forth, he obeyed and invited the cities for the finale. Having that on his hands, he received a letter. I doubted it had come from you, for your letters are always noble, measured, and redolent, as it were, with kindness, while this present one wasn't at all like the previous ones. 4. The words were few: 'Don't slaughter the wild beasts!' And after that, 'Remove your cloak! Change your clothes! Put away the crown!¹⁵ Dismiss the spectators! Don't make use of your own possessions!' Or not that precisely, but rather, 'Continue to feed the wild beasts, and even if you need to sell an estate, do it with a laugh!' Now, do I seem to you right in believing that this letter is suitable for other people? 5. He gave the emperor swift-footed leopards. He'll abstain from these, since he handed them over. Also bears more fearsome than any of those about Munychia¹⁶ in the old days. He'll abstain from those too, since he handed them over. But if someone will not allow him control over the rest [of the animals], consider what this situation is now becoming. 6. I expected you to stop such practices, even if you had adopted them, since you're a man who has achieved a high degree of intelligence, while I expected him to produce a fine show, since he deserves it, and, as you've always done, to let him put such anxieties from his mind. 7. See to it that you restore us with your second effort and consider this letter to be the frankness of a friend – flattery is for others.

13 For a vivid evocation of a civic dynast bankrupting himself, cf. John Chrysostom, *On Vainglory* 4–6.

14 John Malalas (p. 285) claims that the Syriarchy was a four-year office and the cousin did serve from 356 to 360, but Libanius' language here and in B3.5 suggests that the cousin has decided to terminate an office in which he might have continued.

15 Allusions to the ceremonial garments and crown worn by officials presiding over Greek games.

16 The citadel of Piraeus, sacred to Artemis. Legend said that a bear had once done much harm in Piraeus. When it was slain by some young men, plague ensued and an oracle demanded sacrifice of a maiden to Artemis in compensation. A goat was substituted and the plague stopped. In commemoration, each year girls 'played the bear' for the goddess in atonement for slaughter of the bear. Cf. Bekker (1814), 444–45.

5. TO SPECTATUS

(Sent to court in Sirmium, early 358) F365 W368

B5–10 are addressed to or concern Spectatus 1, a *tribunus et notarius* (Ammianus 17.5.15) who travelled widely on imperial business and maintained far-ranging contacts. He was Libanius' only close relative (his father was Libanius' uncle Panolbius) well-connected at court and able to provide access to high officials, and he frequently carried letters for Libanius in his peregrinations between East and West: to court in Milan in 355, on embassy to Persia and back to Milan in 356, to Rome for Constantius II's Vicennalia in Spring 357, on embassy again to Persia and back to court at Sirmium in 358, to Constantinople in the winter 358/9, and then back to court at Sirmium in Spring 359. He was capable and ready enough with assurances that he could perform this or that favour 'in his sleep', but he was not always reliable. In fact, Libanius was frequently frustrated at his cousin's failure to perform requested favours, as B5, 8 and 9 attest. Libanius constantly felt these same frustrations with other correspondents, who often failed to promote the interests of his friends as vigorously as he desired, but he was obliged to be more circumspect in expressing those frustrations to others. Nonetheless, Spectatus did occasionally produce results (cf. *epp.* 573, 588) and, significantly, it was he who encouraged Libanius to write to two men holding the important post of *magister officiorum*, Musonius 1 (356–57) and later Florentius 3 (359–61), and he facilitated contact with these powerful court officials by delivering the letters himself.

B5 addresses the concerns of Honoratus 3, son of Quirinus and pupil of Libanius (354–58). It was common practice in the fourth century to enrol a son on the lists of a government bureau in order to guarantee a post when the boy was ready to take up service. In 358, as part of a 'tightening up' operation, the emperor Constantius ordered all people enrolled in a government bureau to present themselves at court or risk being struck from the lists. Quirinus, who had enrolled his son Honoratus as a *notarius*, is trying to have the order waived since the boy is still a student and, in any event, convalescing from a serious illness. Honoratus' case is discussed in *epp.* 359/N28 and 366/B35 to Bassus 5, the head of the corps of notaries (*primicerius notariorum*), and in two letters to Spectatus (*epp.* 358 and 365/B5). B64 concerns the same problem confronting a man with young sons enrolled as imperial couriers (*agentes in rebus*).

1. This letter ought to have been praise for your activities on behalf of Honoratus, but instead it arrives again bearing a request. Although the request is surely reasonable, my first point¹⁷ justifies my fear that my next letter will be imitating this one. 2. Yet, why on earth will you not do what you promised?

17 That the current letter ought to consist of praise for Spectatus' efforts, not yet another request for the same favour. Libanius had already complained about Spectatus' inaction in *ep.* 358.

Is it that lying is a fine thing? It's surely not like you to honour falsehood. Or is it that your influence is insufficient for the favour we're requesting? And yet, you mocked Quirinus for omitting nothing in his zeal and you insinuated that you could perform favours of *that* sort even in your sleep! 3. Well then, I know that you still grant favours, readily gratifying the person who asks politely and rebuffing the one who makes demands. So what's left is that you are neglecting them [Quirinus and Honoratus] like men who are no friends of ours. But whenever you make that remark about your mother, you'll be able to make it against me as well!¹⁸ 4. Well, you who do whatever *you* wish and practice making excuses for what *you* willingly omit, bear in mind the excellent character of the young man and respect Quirinus' entreaties, which he made day after day, a man at whose appearance even a god would feel respect! And consider that I too am a kind of father to this pupil of mine, and moreover, that your mother wishes it and that our uncle¹⁹ also wishes it. I could add that the whole city wishes it! Take these things to heart and don't contemplate what you'll *say*, but what you'll *do* to carry out the favour.

6. TO ANATOLIUS

(Sent to court in Sirmium, summer 358) F333 W336

Spectatus' most important moment on the wider historical stage came in 358, when he went on embassy to the Persian king, Shapur II, with two other legates, Prosper and Eustathius (Ammianus 17.5.15; 14.1–2). The embassy produced no lasting peace agreement, but it incited Libanius nonetheless to compose a panegyric on his cousin's rhetorical triumph. He read the work out to a chosen audience in Antioch and dispatched copies to selected friends, including Anatolius 3, Praetorian Prefect of Illyricum (357–60) and the most reliable patron Libanius had in high places. Anatolius was passionate about sophistic culture and enjoyed the kind of banter served up in B6, in which Libanius basks in the afterglow of the embassy while needling Anatolius to produce some similar display of eloquence to rival that of Spectatus. B55–64 are all addressed to Anatolius. On Roman–Persian relations in the 350s, see Dodgeon and Lieu (1991), 211–30; Blockley (1992), 12–24.

1. Spectatus is brilliant after his embassy, and he admires you in particular. Whether he admires you for the right reasons, that I don't know, but I know

¹⁸ Apparently, Spectatus' mother frequently criticised his failure to exert himself more, to which he had a standard response. Libanius concedes that this response will now be directed at him as well.

¹⁹ Phasganius.

for sure that he admires you greatly! And it's due to his tongue that we Greeks weren't beaten by the barbarians in eloquence. 2. I'm speaking, of course, of the eloquence by which he got the better of the Persian in his own palace. But I'm afraid I may annoy you, for you believe that no one else ought to be praised so long as *you* are alive! Even now you'll be choking with rage because, in addition to administering your provinces, you didn't go there on embassy and by your own clamour turn the man to stone! 3. Be that as it may, this must be spoken of, so that you'll twist and turn sleepless all night long!²⁰ When he called our ambassadors into his presence, and marvelled a great deal over justice and those who administer justice, he said, 'I am now the one being wronged, while *you* are the wrongdoers'. And he spoke of some portion of land, which belonged to them before our present occupation, and which 'those desirous of peace must give up'. 4. Fine things were said by others, and you'll judge for yourself that they were fine when you learn what they were. But the arguments of the 'bureaucrat', as you would claim, but of the 'orator', by my argument,²¹ demonstrated that he was seeking restitution *not* from the men he was accusing, but from *these* men. For one group of people had seized the land, while *someone else* was being treated as an enemy. And it was terrible if someone should call 'ancestral' things which *didn't* come to him from his ancestor, and should persuade another fellow to give up things which *are* part of his ancestral inheritance!²² 5. By the gods, wouldn't you wish to have said these things rather than to govern twice as much territory as you do govern? Reply to my letter and write something similar, O you who have sent away all too few people as private citizens, for the deluge of your appointments leads many to the imperial feed trough!

20 Like Strepsiades in Aristophanes, *Clouds* 36.

21 Spectatus was a *notarius* and therefore skilled in shorthand. Libanius anticipates Anatolius' retort that the man was a mere 'bureaucrat' (στυρατιώτης), not a genuine 'orator' (ὁρήτωρ).

22 The obscurity of the passage is intentional, since Anatolius loved tortuous sophistic reasoning. *Ep.* 331/N35 offers a more straightforward account of what Spectatus argued: 'Sire, if Constantius is appropriating parts of your territories, then maintain yourself under arms while ever he maintains his aggression. However, if those whom you accuse are long since dead, and he wants to put an end to hostilities on terms of the status quo, be careful that, for all your complaints of aggression, you yourself be not proved the aggressor.' The dispute concerns lands ceded by Narses to Diocletian in 298 or 299, cf. Dodgeon and Lieu (1991), 133, 211–12.

7. TO SPECTATUS

(Sent to court in Sirmium, summer 358) F352 W355

1. Why don't I tell you how I amuse myself? Well, I amuse myself in imagining that I can observe your actions and comment on each one of them. 'Now I see Spectatus not far from the emperor! now he's very close by! now he's at his side! and is even recounting his journey to the Persian, the rivers he crossed, the land he traversed, the peoples, their way of life, the speeches he delivered on embassy! 2. The emperor, with a gentle countenance that conveys his pleasure, praises the orator, and in seeking an honour for him, can discover none better than to send him back.'²³ 3. The orator recalls – but only just – a certain sophist,²⁴ a kinsman to whom he makes splendid promises, but for whom he does absolutely nothing, persuading himself that it's good enough to have a laugh and to love him dearly, and – presto! – the charge is dismissed!' 4. Such are my thoughts – in some of them I take real pleasure, and though in others I have a bone to pick, I'm not really aggrieved. For instance, I had the highest hopes for the pepper²⁵ and didn't get any, but nonetheless I'm highly amused at seeing you as a student of the General Chares – at least as far as promises are concerned.²⁶ 5. But surely that horse you gave to Bassianus²⁷ reveals me to be a liar. Oh, yes, it most certainly does! In fact, it's from that stock that has Boreas as an ancestor. That's why he needs Boreas to get him to budge, and unless there's a strong following wind, he remains at the starting line!²⁸ 6. I fully expect him to imitate Xanthus and, after a good drubbing, actually utter human speech!²⁹ Such, in my view, is the excellence of the horses *you* found!

8. TO SPECTATUS

(Carried by Parthenius to court, summer/autumn 359) F74 W72

In summer/autumn 359, the Antiochene decurion Parthenius (*BLZG* 232), nephew of Eusebius ix, travelled to court in Constantinople with four letters of recommen-

²³ To Antioch.

²⁴ Libanius.

²⁵ As a present from Persia.

²⁶ Athenian general of the fourth century BC notorious for breaking promises to Athens' allies in the Second Athenian League.

²⁷ Bassianus 2, nephew of Spectatus.

²⁸ The horses of Boreas, the North wind, were as swift 'as the wind'. This horse was not.

²⁹ Achilles' horse Xanthus speaks at *Iliad* 19.404–17.

dition, including B8, 41 and 116, in the hope of securing an official post. He appears not to have been successful. Here Libanius chides his cousin Spectatus for his lethargy.

1. I am perfectly aware that in asking you to show some enthusiasm on behalf of a friend, I'm calling a tortoise to a footrace. For if you see Parthenius and receive my letter, you'll put on the face of a man pleased at seeing him and at receiving the letter. And you'll ask what he needs and you'll bid him be confident and speak, and you'll claim that the greatest favours are really small and that there's nothing that can't happen. But when the moment comes for action, you'll break ranks, toss aside your promises, and you'll look upon the deceived man with a hearty laugh, finding in the fact that you laugh more than other people some kind of novel defence of your conduct.

2. But even though I know those things, nonetheless, I'm writing. For either you'll follow your customary nature and confirm what I've written, or you'll rise above your nature and, by proving wrong the contents of my letter, you'll gratify the man you prove wrong.

9. TO SPECTATUS

(Carried by Miccalus to Constantinople, early 360) F98 W97

B9 was carried to Constantinople by Miccalus, son of Pompeianus i, an Antiochene *principalis* with whom Libanius' family had close ties. Like so many decurions of his day, Miccalus was hoping to escape curial duties through imperial service and wanted to enlist Spectatus' help. He also carried an excellent letter of introduction to be presented to the *magister officiorum*, Florentius 3, cf. *ep.* 97/N53. Miccalus secured a position either as an assessor or an advocate under Priscianus 1, governor of Euphratensis in 360–61 and he became governor of Thrace in 362 through the patronage of Secundus Salutius 3. His brother, Olympius 3, one of Libanius' closest friends, appears frequently in the correspondence, cf. B43, 66–67, 78, 82–83.

1. If men knew what your attitude towards me was like, they wouldn't bid me send letters to you on their behalf. On the contrary, even if I myself asked them to take the letters, they would ask in turn that I *not* write, since this would only bring them harm. But at present many things pass unnoticed, in particular, the fact that you count my interests of no importance.

2 Although it was possible for me to teach Miccalus the truth and then hold my peace, I was ashamed – more at your contempt than at myself being neglected – and I allowed Miccalus' ignorance about these things to go on, thinking that this period of deception would be a gain for him. He's the one on the journey

and, at any rate, when he's come and handed you the letter, he'll discover the true facts. 3. But one thing I do know, that even if you don't focus your attention on him for my sake, there's nothing you won't do for him due to another necessity. I'm not calling 'necessity' his own courtesy and the requirement of either honouring such men or getting a reputation for evil. For such a consideration doesn't amount to much for many people. But you know Miccalus' brother: formidable in speech, formidable in action, and he knows both how to return a favour and to exact justice.³⁰ 4. I know that you'll fear *his* thunder! In order to keep the air clear for yourself, you'll decide to be all in all for Miccalus.

10. TO ITALICIANUS

(Sent to ?Constantinople, summer 361) F630 W545

The recipient of B10, Italicianus, was *vicarius Asiae* in 361 and suitor for the hand of a kinswoman of Libanius, the sister of Thalassius 2 and Bassianus 2. Spectatus was being uncharacteristically helpful by writing to his mother, Bassiana, who was also the young woman's grandmother. In *ep.* 642, composed soon after B10, Libanius encourages Italicianus to do a favour for the family, but subsequent letters make no mention of the marriage and there are hints of a slight cooling in Italicianus' attitude toward Libanius (*epp.* 659.1, 665.1), suggesting perhaps that the marriage did not take place.

1. Spectatus is turning out a good man towards us, and he writes to his mother, on the one hand, such praises, and on the other, such appeals, that he's left nothing else for me – the arguments which I employ in person are the ones he sent in letters. 2. What's still more admirable, he didn't write more favourable things in the letters carried by your people, but *not* write such things in those carried by his own people – for that surely is the way of deceivers – rather he's the same through every letter.³¹ 3. So he's managing the affair well for us. One must be pleased with the fact that grandmother is hearing such things and, if she's pleased, it's likely that she'll agree to the match. 4. I think you ought to do what I counselled you to do, since there isn't anything better that could be found in response to this present enthusiasm.

30 Olympius 3, younger brother of Miccalus, governor of Macedonia in 356 and senator at Constantinople.

31 Privacy was a constant problem in the transport of letters. The letter-carrier might tamper with the wax seal and discover the contents or the recipient might choose to read the letter publicly, as Libanius often did.

11. TO ARISTAENETUS

(Carried by Thalassius to Nicomedia, 357/8) F330 W333

B11–18 all concern the heirs of Thalassius 1, who married Theodora 2, sister of Spectatus. Thalassius had held the rank of Count (*comes*) at the court of Constantius and was entrusted with important court business, both secular and religious, in the 340s. In 351 he was stationed at Antioch as Gallus Caesar's Prefect (*praefectus praetorio praesens*). Himself a man of 'imperious disposition', he did little to curb Gallus' angry moods and violent outbursts. Indeed, his damaging reports to the emperor were believed to have been instrumental in bringing about the Caesar's downfall (Ammianus 14.1.10, cf. *ep.* 15/N1). He died in office in 354. The two sons, Thalassius 2 and Bassianus 2, took their father's path into imperial service. The younger Thalassius abandoned his rhetorical studies at his father's death and set his sights on a post at court. B11 is a model letter of introduction written by Libanius to his intimate friend, Aristaenetus 1 of Nicomedia, and carried by Thalassius 2 as he travelled northwards to court in 357/8.

1. This Thalassius has his father's name, but his character is even nobler than his father's. For who is so courteous, who so good? Who started a friendship more readily, who preserved an existing friendship better? Who refrained more from jesting, who bore better with jests? 2. He didn't spend as much time at his studies as he wished due to being an orphan, and grieving at that fact, he counts blessed those in whom he recognises eloquence and befriends them. Though he lives in the midst of great wealth, he is more self-controlled than those in penury, and he uses his possessions for the protection of the needy, praising wealth for the sole reason that it offers a noble nature the opportunity to display itself. 3. These qualities don't escape Strategius³² either, and admiring them, as do I, he inquires after him when he is absent and rejoices when he is present. In particular, he often asked, 'Why is it that he alone asks for nothing?' For the lad is ready to grant but slow to request, and if he should be seen anywhere, praises come from all sides, from those who have flourished and those who know people who are flourishing. 4. No one blamed Fortune for her goodwill toward him, so zealous was he in being moderate in the midst of unbounded possessions. Among the people he knows, some he benefited, others he did no harm. Me he loves more than anyone might love a father, while he shows me more respect than a pupil. And he makes me master of his affairs, just as the law makes him the master. Neither would it be good for me to be silent about this state of affairs nor for you to

32 Strategius Musonianus, Praetorian Prefect of the East (354–58).

remain in ignorance. 5. I'd be in the wrong, and you'd be harmed, if the two of you weren't introduced (quite rightly!) and shouldn't know one another.

12. TO THALASSIUS

(Sent to court in Sirmium, summer 358) F377 W380

Libanius was a strong proponent of traditional civic values and deplored his contemporaries' desire to flee their city councils. Through his letters, however, he routinely recommended friends and acquaintances for posts that will allow them to escape their councils, as he does for Miccalus in B9. B12 is a rare example of Libanius voicing his frank views on this trend. Here he chides Thalassius 2 for dallying at court instead of returning home to a better fate.

1. I have no fault to find with your family – rather I feel much gratitude towards them. For not only do I get what I requested, but if I lapse in making demands, they claim they're being wronged since they're not helping in any way! 2. However, both your family and I fault *you*, in that you placed hope of political influence of some sort before spending time with your relatives and friends. And yet, they say that you're applying yourself to business there in no lazy fashion, since you're not using up the time in foolery, idleness, pranks, and sleep, but rather in hard work, sobriety, energetic action, the pleasure of orderly companions, and making Spectatus' way of life your model. 3. For my part, I expected you to do these things, once you had gone there, but I expected you to consider staying at home better than going there. Whoever has a wife, young and good, but no children yet, and moreover has great wealth, enough so as to bring him happiness, why does he need to give up guarding what he has and preparing for heirs from his own line and, instead, to be all agog at something else? 4. To me, at any rate, *that* seemed to be the advantageous course, both back then and now, but you chose departure on the pretext that you would be coming back again in summer. Instead, you've fastened on to the Pannonians³³ and dishonoured your promises!

13. TO EUPHEMIUS

(Sent to Cilicia, summer 361) F620 W535

Thalassius did not heed Libanius' request to return to Antioch. Instead, he took a post in one of the bureaux for imperial correspondence, from which he departed after a

33 The court is presently at Sirmium in Pannonia.

brief career with the title of *ex proximo libellorum* (Ammianus 22.9.16). Since the *proximus* was second in command of the bureau and seniority was critical to promotion, we can infer that Thalassius purchased this honorary title after about two years of service. By autumn 361 he had returned to Antioch where he faced serious legal proceedings.

B13 is addressed to Euphemius 2, a former pupil of Libanius who held a fiscal appointment at court (360–63), perhaps as *comes sacrarum largitionum* or *comes rei privatae*. Libanius requests his help to clear Thalassius 2 of a charge, apparently that he had wrongly appropriated imperial or, perhaps, civic properties. Property disputes of this sort were common, since formerly civic properties often became imperial properties and, all too frequently, ended up in the possession of powerful imperial officials. In any case, the city council is laying claim to the same properties, which were probably acquired by the family when Thalassius 1 was Prefect of the East. Libanius himself had faced a similar accusation of wrongful appropriation of property in the previous year, cf. *ep.* 126/N57. *Ep.* 618 is also directed to Euphemius on behalf of an unnamed cousin who needs assistance, perhaps for the same affair. Moreover, the council was holding Thalassius liable for civic duties.³⁴

1. I know that I often described to you the long-standing affection of the marvellous Thalassius for me, and the labours which he endured that I might be saved when that ‘thunderbolt’³⁵ had been set in motion, in response to which you let out a shout in your admiration for the fellow and called him your own saviour and benefactor from his actions towards me. 2. When I saw him sitting in the city square downcast, I was disturbed, and I approached him and asked why in heavens he was like that, but he remained silent. At his silence, I was myself more disturbed. 3. Then I left him, went to another of my acquaintances, and learned of the business which understandably caused him pain but which might rightly be prevented by you. As for the penalty for what has been done, perhaps one shouldn’t even mention it. That’s how things stand at present. 4. So I’m writing you without his knowledge, wishing to offer you the means for noble deeds and myself to appear as one who remembers the man who extended his hand to me in a crisis that needed some god. 5. I suppose that Heracles too right to the end remembered Athena, that it was through her, as Homer says, that he escaped the river Styx and came to Cerberus.³⁶ If the goddess hadn’t been present and

34 *CTh.* 6.26.1 (AD 362) granted members of the correspondence bureaux (*scrinia*) exemption from curial duties after fifteen years of service.

35 Perhaps a threat from Gallus Caesar after Libanius’ return to Antioch in 354.

36 The twelfth and final labour of Heracles was to fetch the three-headed hound Cerberus from Hades and bring him to King Eurystheus. Athena supported Heracles in all his labours.

assisted him, perhaps – but I'll omit the rest out of respect for Heracles. 6. What then? Well, you ought to think it dreadful and illegal and unworthy of your administration and to hate it! That Eurybatus or Phrynonidas³⁷ or rather, that fellow who has shown *all* those denounced for wickedness to be virtual Aeacuses,³⁸ and who repays favours with accusation and indictments – he knows that he's committed the act of an executioner, advancing a multitude of charges, though he can't prove anything, and your sword will be raised against him, that sword which has already passed through slanderers and which will be applied again! But he believes that whatever harm he can do to the house of Thalassius, under the pretext of justice, is a gain, and at one moment he claims that everyone can bear witness, and at another he is ordering everyone to join in. 7. In point of fact, his cunning has produced results. Fields are abandoned, while crops have perished, and managers on the estates are fleeing to the mountains. Those who feel envy towards the man lay their feelings bare and have made his property a 'sitting duck',³⁹ a man through whom they were frequently rescued from dangers. 8. And if ever it's necessary that workmen or any such thing be procured for public use, more than half the payment comes from Thalassius' property, for they think the man is prostrate. 9. But the beginning of the trial put him in a better light, and the end, god willing, will be like the beginning, and someone will see him in pursuit of those who now treat him outrageously. 10. But I don't know how this last remark escaped me, especially as I know enough to guard against speaking presumptuously. But you, grieving as if you were me and suffering these things, and still more, thinking that you yourself are suffering these things, reprove their arrogant deeds and demonstrate that whoever doesn't control himself will pay a penalty, and adorn your administration by your anger on behalf of Thalassius and his affairs.

14. TO ATARBIUS

(Sent to Euphratensis, summer 363) F1404 W1209

The accession of Julian to the throne was ominous, since there were rumours that he would seek revenge against those who had brought about Gallus' ruin. Thalassius 2 and Bassianus 2 had much to fear as sons of the Prefect held partially responsible for

37 Proverbial swindlers, often cited by Libanius and Classical sources, e.g. Demosthenes 18.24; Aristophanes, *Thesmophoriazousae* 861; Aeschines 3.137.

38 Aeacus was one of the judges in the underworld, proverbial for strict justice.

39 Literally, 'Mysian spoils'. The Mysians were proverbially defenceless and thus easy prey for anyone. Cf. Aristotle, *Rhetoric* 1.12.1372b; Demosthenes 18.72. Libanius uses the proverb often.

Gallus' death. Libanius tried to treat these rumours as so much foolishness, but nonetheless he approved Bassianus' attempt to dispel them through a prudent show of support in a letter to Libanius clearly intended to be read out publicly (*ep.* 679/N79). On arriving in Antioch, Julian made no secret of his hatred for the younger Thalassius, who was refused admission to the palace with other imperial officials and *honorati*. His enemies sought to exploit this dramatic sign of vulnerability. On the day following the imperial rebuff, a crowd of men who had a legal case against Thalassius shouted in the emperor's presence that Thalassius had 'lawlessly robbed them of their property'. Julian, however, sensing the overwhelming forces arrayed against a single individual, forbade the Prefect to hear any other suits until Thalassius had given satisfaction to the emperor himself, his more formidable opponent. The two men were reconciled soon thereafter (Ammianus 22.9.16–17).

Reconciliation with Julian did not convey immunity from the mounting lawsuits facing the family as the pagan revival gathered force. During the reign of Constantius, Thalassius and Bassianus had converted two pagan temples in Phoenicia, probably in Tyre, into a private house. In accordance with Julian's law on restitution of temple property, the city council appropriated the house and insisted further that the two brothers rebuild the temples – obviously at huge expense. In a letter to the governor of Phoenicia, Libanius laboured to defend his relations for conduct that he despised in others: 'The sons of Thalassius converted temples into a house: they acted in conformity with the policy adopted by the emperor of the day. I do not approve of it, but anyway this was legal at the time' (*ep.* 1364/N105).

B14 reveals that in 363 family properties in the Euphrates region were also under attack and that the governor Atarbius was unsympathetic. How Thalassius emerged from these numerous legal difficulties is unknown, since he is never again mentioned in the historical record. That may be due to the accident of our sources, but it is worth noting that Julian's reign made relations between Libanius and these Christian kinsmen difficult. They probably never recovered the influence they had enjoyed under Constantius and Libanius never recovered the influence he enjoyed under Julian.

B14 is addressed to Atarbius, a native of Ancyra who served as governor of Euphratensis in 362–63 and governor of Macedonia in 364.

1. Even if you happened to be somewhat harsh and difficult towards other men, towards the sons of Thalassius surely you would need to be gentle and kind and to take it ill if anything of their property should be destroyed. You *are* gentle towards other people – I don't criticise it – but, so they claim, you ran roughshod over these men's interests, and you're running roughshod over the interests of their companions and friends, and those to whom you promised that you would preserve their property around the Euphrates. 2. So listen, preserve what remains, and as Thucydides says, dispel evil by means of good,⁴⁰

40 Thucydides 2.42.2.

and contemplate the fact that their father, when he was in charge of great affairs, applied the gentlest of measures to both the weak and the strong.

15. TO ARADIUS RUFINUS

(Sent eastwards towards the Persian front, summer 363) F1380 W1440

B15–18. Bassianus 2 had been a pupil of Libanius (*epp.* 155, 231) before pursuing a career as a *notarius* on the model of his uncle Spectatus (Ammianus 29.2.5.). He was apparently not implicated in the Gallus affair and was spared the worst of his older brother's problems. In 362/3 he married Prisca 2, daughter of Helpidius 4, Prefect of the East in 360–61, thus uniting two families that had risen to great power under Constantius. Libanius' relations with Helpidius as Prefect had been abysmal. It had been 'that dunce Helpidius' who had pruned Libanius' imperial salary on arriving in office as Prefect in early 360 (*ep.* 740/N89), an affront that was soon followed by another when the city council totally eliminated the stipends traditionally paid to Libanius' assistant teachers, prompting Libanius to compose *Oration* 31, 'To the Antiochenes for the Teachers'.⁴¹ A pious Christian from an undistinguished Paphlagonian family, Helpidius was 'common in appearance and speech', though praiseworthy for being 'straightforward and humane' as Prefect (Ammianus 21.6.9). He was another conspicuous example of a man without traditional *paideia* or noble birth who had risen to the highest civilian office through the ranks of the notaries.

Like the two previous letters, B15 attests the sudden vulnerability under Julian of the Christian aristocracy of service who had risen to power under Constantius. Pancratius of Doliche had given a property to Prisca, daughter of the Prefect Helpidius, as a 'gift', in return for which Helpidius used his influence to 'save' Pancratius on many occasions. Sensing the vulnerability under Julian of the families of the two former Prefects, Helpidius 4 and Thalassius 1, Pancratius no longer shows deference and has suddenly decided to repossess his land. Libanius requests the intervention of Aradius Rufinus 11/v, *comes Orientis* in 363–64.

1. Bassianus is a child of the well-known Thalassius, a kinsman by marriage to Helpidius, a relation of mine, and, in addition, my pupil, a young man who is a gentleman and who does things for which he might be befriended. Long before their marriage, Pancratius, a man from Doliche, gave some estates as a gift to Bassianus' wife, in return for which Pancratius was saved many times by her father. 2. Previously he complied with the laws and allowed those who had taken over the estates to possess them. But now that everything is in confusion and has not yet been restored to order,⁴² he has

⁴¹ *Oration* 31 is translated in Norman (2000).

⁴² Julian is alive and on campaign against the Persians. Hence, the 'confusion' must allude to the shifts of power and settling of scores taking place during Julian's brief reign.

arrogantly reversed his own actions and has no shame in tyrannically repossessing what he had given as an upright man. 3. Well, may he not cease to dwell in shamelessness, but you, good sir, deal out strong justice, as you have always done.

16. TO HELPIDIUS

(Sent to Paphlagonia, summer 363) F1410 W1463

B16 is Libanius' rather awkward attempt to explain away the previous bad relations between himself and Helpidius 4, the Prefect who had waged 'war on the Muses' by trimming Libanius' salary (*ep.* 258/B145). Libanius suggests that their bad relations were due to men 'skilled in deception', an allusion to Eubulus 2, a powerful decurion and principal rival to the faction formerly headed by Libanius' uncle Phasganius, who died in 359. Eubulus appears to have scored a success in persuading the city council to eliminate civic payments to Libanius' assistant teachers c. 360 and to have persuaded the Prefect to trim Libanius' salary. Cf. B150 for rivals' attacks on Libanius in winter 359/60; *ep.* 740/N89 ('that dunce Helpidius').

1. I was among those who praised you when you administered your prefecture, and now I continue to praise your justice and courage: the former didn't permit verdicts to be bought for gold; by the latter, you relieved the cities of a tax that it was impossible for them to endure.⁴³ 2. Now, if I did this, though not one of your circle, it's nothing extraordinary, since I also criticise some of my acquaintances. For I suppose that one ought to praise or censure deeds, not praise excessively those one associates with, but censure those whom one doesn't spend time with. As to the fact that I didn't visit you back then,⁴⁴ perhaps I'm responsible, perhaps you are, perhaps neither you nor I, but rather, men who were skilled in deception. 3. Let all those things be wiped clean by the new marriage connection, and let this one great good prevail over many falsehoods.

17. TO PRISCA

(Sent to Paphlagonia, summer 363) F1409 W1462

This charming letter welcomes Bassianus' new bride, Prisca 2, to the family and extends best wishes for the happiness of the new couple. Prisca is one of only three

43 Libanius distinguishes between payments in gold for 'votes', here 'verdicts', and the general tax in kind (φόρος), which Helpidius remitted for numerous cities due to poor harvests.

44 Libanius paid daily visits to the Prefect Strategius Musonianus (354–58), cf. *Or.* 1.108.

women to whom Libanius writes, cf. Schouler (1985), esp. 133–36 (on Prisca); also, B155 (to Alexandra, wife of Seleucus 1).

1. Do you see how much power you have through your all-encompassing beauty? Everything has been neglected by Bassianus: a wonderful grandmother, worthy brothers, noble uncles, an extensive, perhaps brilliant clan, a city equally brilliant, thousands of other things, and you alone are everything to him, and he is lured on and desires you and runs and sings the praises of Paphlagonia: the character of the land, its abundant springs, the sea nearby – there is nothing that he doesn't praise! Now even that dreadful cold seems mild to him! 2. Moreover, it's not Paphlagonia that has won him over for the region; rather it's you and your spiritual qualities, and, I might even add, your physical qualities as well. It's terrible if, when Homer talks about being 'tall and lovely',⁴⁵ we judge virtues in that area to be unimportant! 3. Thus, I rejoice with the young man, as he inclines with all his mind towards you, for in this way, the house might best be preserved, and, at the same time, I'm the one who brought you together, and I've done as much as anyone to create this union, especially by encouraging the noble Bassiana⁴⁶ to devote herself to the chase! You too ought to imitate your husband and be fair in reciprocating. 4. What I mean is this: admire Syria yourself, and when he leads, follow him, or rather, when he wants to stay there, remind him of things at home, so that he may appear to prefer *your* country to his own on account of *you*, while you appear to prefer *his* country to your own on account of *him*!

18. TO HELPIDIUS

(Sent to Paphlagonia, spring 364) F1156 W1301

Three letters, including B18, attest the birth to Bassianus and Prisca of two children, Aristaenetus 2 and Bassiana, and these letters are all the more poignant in the light of the catastrophe that would befall the family in 371, when Bassianus was convicted of a treasonable use of divination, despite his futile plea that he had merely wanted to know the sex of the child his wife was carrying (Ammianus 29.2.5). Only through the energetic intervention of his kinsmen was his life spared. His property was confiscated. Aristaenetus 2 later studied with Libanius and became Prefect of Constantinople in 392, Consul in 404. He is the last known descendant of Libanius' family.

45 Like Athena when she appears to Odysseus disguised as a woman at *Odyssey* 13.289.

46 Bassianus' grandmother.

1. I met the excellent Aristaenete,⁴⁷ and on meeting her, I admired the woman, and on seeing your daughter, I considered you blessed even, both you, her parents, and her spouse. Now I need a *third* thing – I’m eager to see their son!⁴⁸ 2. Perhaps you also will be eager for equal rights, if another son is born and raised here. If you send for him, you’ll hear us asking for the older one!⁴⁹

19. TO ANATOLIUS⁵⁰

(Carried by Iamblichus travelling to Rome, spring 357) F574 W490

B19–22. In contrast to the connections with the Christian aristocracy of service stands Libanius’ connection with a distinguished philosophical family of Apamea, observable primarily through the series of letters written to his young kinsman Iamblichus 2, grandson of Sopater 1, who had been a student of the philosopher Iamblichus of Apamea and later a philosophical adviser to the emperor Constantine before being put to death on accusations of magic. Sopater had two sons, Sopater 2 and Himerius 3, father of the younger Iamblichus. Himerius had held a number of imperial offices, while his brother, the younger Sopater, was a philosopher in his own right and a prominent decurion in Apamea, funding the Olympic Games there in 361. He had in the past entertained Constantius and Gallus and he would entertain the emperor Julian on his march westwards towards Persia (Jul. *ep.* 98). On the character of Apamea’s gentry and the memory of Iamblichus, see Balty (1974).

At the death of his father in the mid-350s, the younger Iamblichus ceased his formal studies and left Apamea for Antioch. Libanius received him warmly, genuinely admiring his character and taking a keen interest in his prospects.⁵¹ In response to a ‘summons’, presumably from court with the possibility of political office, he embarked on a journey to Rome in spring 357, armed with a packet of nine letters of introduction addressed to friends and contacts of Libanius stretching from Tarsus to Rome.⁵²

47 Wife of Helpidius 4 and mother of Prisca 2.

48 Aristaenetus 2, born in Paphlagonia and left there with a wet nurse while his parents travelled with Aristaenete to Antioch.

49 A second child, Bassiana, was born some months later in Antioch after a difficult pregnancy (*ep.* 1292). Libanius jokingly imagines that the older child will reside in Paphlagonia, the younger one in Antioch. If Helpidius requests the one in Antioch, Libanius will request the one in Paphlagonia.

50 Anatolius 3, Prefect of Illyricum (357–60). Iamblichus does not appear to have reached Sirmium on this journey. Hence, the present letter was probably never delivered.

51 Libanius as his ‘guide’ at B19.5 and 20.3. Both Silanus and Themistius had met Iamblichus in Antioch, implying an extended stay (*epp.* 573, 575).

52 Letters of introduction, *epp.* 569–70, 571/N24, 572–73, 574/B17, 575–77. ‘Summons’ at *ep.* 571.4/N24.4; alluded to also in 593.1.

Libanius stressed his distinguished lineage, his superiority to money, and (to Aristaenetus) his deep devotion to the gods.⁵³

1. Iamblichus departed from us in tears, saying, ‘Will I ever see the East again?’ ‘Certainly,’ I replied, ‘you’ll very soon see among the Illyrians the finest of the men of the East!’ Since he’s quick and descended from that house which distinguished itself for intellect, he saw what I meant and stopped his tears, weighing up the cities here against the thought of that one man through whom the cities enjoy their fame. 2. You’ll honour him without hesitation because of his father, his uncle, and his grandfather, and when you come to know his intellectual qualities – for he has devoted himself to excelling – you’ll admire the man. 3. When you ask for an account of my affairs, you’ll see that he imitates *you* in his attitude towards me, and on perceiving this, you’ll think of him as your own son. Such indeed is your way in your enthusiasm for me! 4. He’ll speak of other matters, the quantity of my recitations, perhaps even something of their beauty, the throng of boys, my labours for the boys, boys who love hard work, many brilliant friends, a few feeble enemies. 5. What he will not say, but which it wouldn’t be right to pass over in silence, is this: out of respect for our kinship he has made me, along with himself, master of his affairs. He would do likewise, I suspect, for a man who was no kinsman, but a good man.

20. TO IAMBLICHUS

(Sent to Constantinople, summer 358) F385 W388

The young Iamblichus was apparently not a hardy traveller, and he tended to find fault a lot: about the cold in crossing the Amanus mountains north of Antioch (*ep.* 593), about the inhospitality of people in Ancyra (*ep.* 607), about not receiving enough news from Libanius. Libanius replied with exasperation that he must put a better face on things and not appear such a complainer (*ep.* 607)! The two fell out of contact for some months as Iamblichus continued his tour, until news arrived that he had not gone to Rome after all – he had yielded to the siren call of Athens. By spring 358 family and friends both are concerned that Iamblichus may not return (*ep.* 327) and B20 from the summer of 358 reveals that Athens has provoked, or perhaps only heightened, a spiritual crisis that Iamblichus is struggling to resolve. He has decided to pursue a philosophical life and believes that this can best come about through ‘things Egyptian’, an allusion to the theurgic Neoplatonism elaborated by the great Iamblichus in *On the Mysteries of the Egyptians*, or, perhaps, an allusion to direct

53 The warmest and most revealing evidence is *ep.* 571/N24 to Aristaenetus.

observation of the lifestyle of pagan priests in Egypt, since the same letter reveals that Iamblichus has also travelled there in the recent past. The 'Egyptian' philosophical life clearly involves serious asceticism, since Libanius reminds him of the drastic nature of the conversion he is contemplating, implying that the task may be greater than Iamblichus will be willing to bear. Why not accept the simpler pleasures of shepherding his family wealth and enjoying a more conventional life with friends and family? On Iamblichus, see Shaw (1995).

1. Hellas is a very sweet sight. You enjoyed it. Egypt is no less so. You've shared in that as well. What remains is for you to restore yourself to your native land and your native land to yourself. Even if you didn't honour her⁵⁴ before, after associating with Hellenes, surely you would be right to admire her! 2. Well now, if you firmly believe, having chosen to live as a philosopher, that this might be brought about for you through things Egyptian, let there be no talk of gold, or fine land, or slaves, or a house. Rather let your fatherland be anywhere that fulfils your noble desire.⁵⁵ But if 'that sea'⁵⁶ is too big for us, let's hold together what a father, after practising hard work, has handed down. 3. I remind you of the places where we spent time together, the speeches we fashioned, the pursuits we enjoyed, our friends and kin, who are now punishing me because of your absence, pressuring me, harassing me, and frequently asking, 'Where is that fellow who obeys your every command?' Since I can neither say that you're disobeying me, nor that I haven't summoned you, I hang my head low and am compelled to remain silent.

21. TO IAMBLICHUS

(Sent to Athens, winter 362/3) F801 W711

Iamblichus' plans for a life in philosophy were temporarily upset by Themistius' summons to him in winter 358/9 to join the senate of Constantinople (cf. introduction to B82 for Themistius' activities). We find Iamblichus in spring 359 in Cilicia, mobilising family and supporters, particularly the Praetorian Prefect Strategius, to fight off this unwanted fate. His own aversion to the Senate was heartily approved by his uncle Sopater and by Libanius, who dismissed the new Senate as suitable for 'nonentities' (*ep.* 34/N48). Freed from obligations to Constantinople, Iamblichus returned to Athens, where we find him three years later in 362/3 content and

⁵⁴ Apamea.

⁵⁵ Cf. Aristophanes, *Ploutos* 1151: 'Where I live well, there is my country'.

⁵⁶ An image for the arduousness of conversion to an ascetic life in philosophy. Iamblichus probably used the phrase in a previous letter.

apparently ready to settle down. Libanius again entreated him either to return home or to stay in Athens, marry and extend the family line there.

1. Your slave approached me and asked for a letter, and although I hesitated, I gave him one. What caused my hesitation was that you seemed, after latching on to the sons of Erechtheus,⁵⁷ that famous Acropolis and those wonderful men, places and gods, to scorn your former delights as a result of these newfound delights.⁵⁸ Nonetheless, love persuaded me to give him the letter, or rather, it compelled me. For nothing prevents me from loving you, though you have set out in pursuit of someone else. Even if treated outrageously, I would have disproved the proverb and would not, for that reason, have broken the ties of love.⁵⁹ 2. I entreat you by your family to wait for Boedromion and to consort with the goddesses,⁶⁰ or if any other initiation beckons, to hasten and become a companion of the gods through their mysteries, but to consider this too sacred, namely to return and uphold your ancestral house, and to be with those of your kin who are still living while honouring those who are departed. 3. But if the land of Pallas⁶¹ is tenacious in her grip on you, I entreat you again to produce children at Athens and to extend our family. For the city is overflowing with the descendants of Codrus⁶² and one and same act will provide sons for you and a test for those dear to you. Those who truly love you will keep on being your friends, but others you'll see flitting away. 4. My good fellow – and from good family! – do in particular what I said first, because it's the right thing. But if the alternative has come out on top, then let there be some dispatch!

22. TO IAMBLICHUS

(Sent to the ?Attic countryside, 365) F1466 W1072

Iamblichus apparently chose not to return to his native Apamea, but rather to live a life of quiet withdrawal in the Attic countryside. B22 from 365 reveals him living, in

57 Athenians, the 'sons' of the mythical king Erechtheus.

58 Libanius too had been enamoured of Athens in his youth, cf. *Or.* 1.12: 'I think that I would have followed Odysseus' example and spurned even marriage with a goddess for a glimpse of the smoke of Athens.'

59 The proverb maintained that 'hybris dispels eros', that is, 'arrogance dispels desire'.

60 An allusion to the Mysteries, the festival for Demeter and Persephone which took place at Athens and Eleusis in the autumn month of Boedromion.

61 Pallas Athena.

62 An early king of Athens.

the manner of most late antique philosophers, a life of quiet retreat surrounded by Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle, and his own great namesake, Iamblichus of Apamea. He was still alive in 390, when he is mentioned several times in Libanius' later body of letters as a man of great distinction. Symmachus also corresponded with him in these later years (cf. Symmachus, *ep.* 9.2). A fragmentary herm (c. 400) found in the Athenian agora contains an inscription honouring Iamblichus for his generosity in helping to rebuild the city walls of Athens, cf. Raubitschek (1964). On the character of late antique philosophical circles alluded to here, see Fowden (1982), esp. 56–59 on the themes of withdrawal and solitude.

1. It's no wonder if you've started to be 'more regal'⁶³ than anyone else towards me. For the word is more fitting for you who live in philosophy than for anyone who was given it in the poem! If you don't receive many letters from me, don't be amazed, since none of your people visits me any more. Although I know the reason, I won't say it. If I were prosecuting, I *could* speak it out, and even that's sufficient for a self-defence. 2. But I *do* deplore that love of yours for the countryside because I don't see you. On the other hand, I thoroughly praise the fact that it keeps you out of the hurly burly. 3. It would be appropriate, I suppose, for a man who is a lover of the Muses to imitate their conduct. And it was the way of the Muses, apparently, to do their thing on a mountain in peace and quiet. If they had spun their songs in the city square of the Thespians,⁶⁴ they might even have been booed! 4. But they were on a mountain, though hardly in solitude, just as you aren't either. For they had one another, and you have those men whom they touched: Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle and your own divine namesake!⁶⁵ So how could it be solitude, a place where a chorus of men like that is assembled?

63 Echoing Agamemnon's insistence on his superiority to Achilles at *Iliad* 9.160.

64 Thespieae was a Boeotian town under Mt Helicon, the traditional home of the Muses. The Thespians venerated the Muses and held an annual festival called the Museia (Pausanias 9.31.3).

65 The philosopher Iamblichus of Apamea (c. 250–c.325).

II. LETTERS TO EMPERORS AND COURT OFFICIALS

All but two (perhaps only one) of the letters addressed to the emperor Julian are available in English in Norman's Loeb edition. I include in this collection the two remaining letters to Julian to complete the 'Julian dossier'. The extant correspondence between Libanius and Julian may be summarised as follows:

Ep. 13/B23 (autumn 353) Brief note on Julian's recovery of health. Allusion to Seleucus 1, an intimate of both Julian and Libanius.

November 355 Julian made Caesar and dispatched to Gaul.

Ep. 493/B24 (May 356) A rival sophist has slandered Libanius to Julian. Advice on how to deal with slanderers.

Ep. 369/N30 (early 358) Response to Julian's request from Gaul to write. Allusion to hesitation to write with frankness (*parrhesia*) after elevation to Caesar in November 355. Praise for 1) double victory, an allusion to Battle of Strasbourg in 357 and panegyric on Constantius from 356, 2) not giving Constantius cause for alarm, 3) not changing with high power, 4) not giving presents to Libanius (!).

Ep. 35/N38 (winter 358/9) Lament for Nicomedia, destroyed in August 358 by earthquake. Praise of Helpidius 6, fresh from Gaul with news. Allusion to Julian's monograph on Battle of Strasbourg (§6).

3 November 361 Constantius II dies, leaving Julian as sole Augustus.

17 July 362 Julian arrives in Antioch to prepare for Persian campaign.

Ep. 610/N93 (August 362) Cover note accompanying *Or.* 13, the speech Julian had requested soon after his arrival in Antioch (*ep.* 736/N88 for Julian and Libanius' initial meeting and request for speech).

Julian, *ep.* 52 (Sept./Oct. 362) Reminder of promise to deliver copy of *Or.* 14 for Aristophanes.

Ep. 760/N94 (Sept./Oct. 362) Brief reply to *ep.* 52, delivered with *Or.* 14.

Julian, *ep.* 53 (Sept./Oct. 362) Ecstatic response to *Or.* 14. Promise to consult with Libanius about Aristophanes.

Ep. 758/N95 (Sept./Oct. 362) Enthusiastic reply to *ep.* 53. Promise to append the emperor's *ep.* 53 to published versions of *Or.* 14.

5 March 363 Julian, angry with the Antiochenes, departs on the Persian campaign.

Julian, *ep.* 58 (10–11 March 363) Long account of the sights on the march east; meeting with Sopater 2 at Hierapolis.

Ep. 802/N98 (March 363) Account of escort for departing emperor and Libanius' return to city. Prayer for victory over Persia and forgiveness for Antioch. Anxiety that he may be the target of the emperor's anger, suggesting that he hasn't received Julian's *ep.* 58, which contains no trace of anger.

Ep. 811/N100 (May 363) Last extant letter to Julian. Recantation of doubts about appointment of Alexander 5 as governor of Syria. His severity is producing results. Description of festival of Calliope with horse races, stage shows and many sacrifices.

23. TO JULIAN

(Sent to ?Bithynia, autumn 353) F13 W13

B23 is one of 18 letters preserved by chance out of the chronological sequence followed by the bulk of the corpus. These gleanings from different years have been collected and inserted at the beginning of the entire corpus as *epp.* 1–18. Wiemer (1996) argues persuasively, largely on prosopographical grounds, that the Julian addressed in *ep.* 13/B23 is in fact the future emperor. The letter was written in autumn 353 when Julian lived as a private citizen in Asia Minor and his half-brother Gallus was a Caesar stationed in Antioch. Although brief, the letter is historically significant because it is one of the few pieces of evidence that can be set against Libanius' account in the later speeches of his relations with Julian in the early years, long before the emperor's arrival in Antioch in July 362. The letter confirms that Libanius enjoyed cordial relations with the young prince and that he might help others who wished to become known to Julian.

1. Out of grief over your illness, I too have fallen into poor health. For what can be pleasant for me if you are suffering? Seleucus¹ really should have reported to me as well the fact that you've escaped the critical stage of the disease. 2. For that very reason I'm persuaded to believe that Entrechius² is fortunate. For he'll see Bithynia when it's better to do so, and it'll be better when your body is in good health. 3. Since I feel gratitude toward you for befriending the man, I'm asking you for another favour, namely to summon him!

1 Seleucus 1, rhetor and close friend of Libanius, who held administrative office in Euphratensis in 361 (cf. B124). A zealous pagan, confidant of Julian, high priest of ?Cilicia in 362, and a participant in the Persian campaign. After Julian's death, he was prosecuted, heavily fined and banished. He intended to compose a history of the Persian expedition. Cf. B129 (to Seleucus) and 155 (to his wife Alexandra). *Or.* 1.116 couples him with Aristaenetos, Libanius' most intimate friend.

2 Entrechius 1, cultivated pagan and close friend of Libanius. Governor of Palestine in 361/2; promoted by Julian to be governor of Pisidia (362–64). He was a native of Nicaea and was looking in 353 for a meeting with Julian.

24. TO JULIAN

(Sent to Gaul, May 356) F493 W1035

Seeck, *BLZG* 189, Foerster (1921, vol. 10), 469 and Petit, *FOL* 67, judged it ‘probable’ that the future emperor is the addressee of B24. Its main themes, sophistic backbiting and protests of loyalty by Libanius’ addressee, are particularly appropriate in a letter to a high official with whom a rival sophist has sought to curry favour, like the ‘drivelling pseudo-sophist’ who criticised Libanius to the Prefect Anatolius 3 (*ep.* 552.1/N22). Wiemer (1995), 18 n. 23, rejects the idea that B24, written in spring 356, was addressed to the Caesar Julian, citing Libanius’ failure to mention Julian’s political promotion in November 355. It is curious that no letter of congratulations on Julian’s political elevation survives, but we know that not all letters to Julian (and others) have been preserved. More significant, in my view, is the formal tone of *ep.* 369/N30 and 35/N38, both of which were assuredly written to the Caesar Julian. Libanius admits in *ep.* 369.3–4/N30, written in winter 357/8, that he had been hesitant about writing to Julian after his political promotion. By contrast, B24, written about six months after Julian’s appointment as Caesar in November 355, suggests a relaxed intimacy between Libanius and his addressee. On balance, Wiemer is likely to be correct in rejecting the Caesar Julian as the addressee, but I include the letter so that readers may judge for themselves.

1. For various reasons I was glad to see Ablabius,³ but particularly as he brought me a letter from you. I shall hate myself before I shall fault you for anything, so thoroughly have you made a practice of promoting my affairs – you’ve been fighting such a long battle now from not being able to tolerate anyone mentioning me with disparagement! 2. Yet you ought to know both how to laugh and to forgive those who slander this fellow in order to flatter that one. They live by flattery and it’s a way of life for them, as rowing is for sailors. 3. That clever fellow, whose character Ablabius reported to me (he wouldn’t divulge his name), wounded me in no other way than this: in his mention of me he committed a solecism and I got caught up in his barbarism though I’d made no mistake. 4. So persuade him, first, to learn how *not* to make these sorts of errors, and *then* to speak badly of me! Or perhaps, at that point, he’ll not speak badly, but as things stand, the man is intractable. If he distresses you with his slanders and you would like to exact justice, it’s very easy. Close your doors to him when you eat and bid him dine at home. Don’t seek any greater revenge, since right now at any rate, he’s offensive because of his gourmandising and his drinking your wine *at* you instead of *with* you.

3 Otherwise unknown.

5. So guard against his unchecked tongue and tell me what in the world his name is, so that whenever I write an encomium on him, he won't be nameless when praised!

25. TO JOVIANUS

(Carried by Clematius to court in Milan, winter 355/6) F435 W1083

In winter 355/6, Clematius 2, an imperial courier (*agens in rebus*) and dear friend of Libanius, travelled from Antioch to court in Milan with 11 letters of introduction, including *epp.* 430/N11, 433/B162, 434/N12, 435/B25, 436/B29, cf. Seeck, *BLZG* 322. B25 is addressed to Jovianus 1, a senior *notarius* who was influential at court in 355. He became head of the corps of notaries (*primicerius notariorum*) in 363 and accompanied Julian on the Persian expedition. At Julian's death, he was put forward as a possible successor, which prompted the successful Emperor Jovian to order his death. The unusual length of this letter testifies to the deep affection felt by Libanius for Clematius.

1. Do you still remember us, now that you've been whisked off to Rome and are gazing on sights such as never before, and persuading yourself that this isn't earth, but some part of heaven? It's not surprising that I remember you, for I'm old-fashioned and for no novelty would I spurn my friends. 2. But perhaps my question was improper, since there's no way you could forget your beloved, not even if you should consort with the gods of Olympus! Don't be surprised if I called myself your beloved, though I'm older than a youth. 3. For you are 'in love' – what goes on has been described and, moreover, this happened long ago with Socrates too, for the youths were in love with the old man.⁴ 4. You share this experience with this Clematius, who has been completely subdued by the god and who can bear to say or hear nothing that doesn't pertain to me! 5. As soon as he arrived here, I took him to the council house for a declamation, which meant more to Clematius than commanding armies, and a little later, when I fell sick, I had the man as my sole consolation, and it was because of him that the pain didn't overwhelm my spirit, for his presence comforted me, and during his absence, the expectation of his presence was enough to help me. 6. When I got better, we each had a horse and, if we needed to go anywhere, we would ride together, inseparable, visiting the authorities and the baths, both those in town and the one in

⁴ This mannered use of the language of Platonic love as a 'friendship' theme is characteristic of letters to high-ranking officials. Jovianus greatly admired Libanius' speeches (*ep.* 411).

the suburbs – you’ve heard of it, that large, beautiful bath with which Datianus beautified our city.⁵ 7. By now envy was beginning to get into some of those who saw us: ‘Good God, these fellows think they’ll outdo Heracles and Theseus⁶ in their friendship for one another! An oath prevents them from talking even when they’re separated!’⁷ 8. One time, Clematius visited Strategius⁸ when I wasn’t present, and he was stunned and asked, ‘Where’s your other half?’ Another time I reached Strategius first and it was the same astonishment and the same question. 9. The finest among Clematius’ qualities is that he has done well by everyone here, and he asks for a return favour from no one. You know that, when Clematius served with the noble Palladius,⁹ all kinds of trouble was avoided by my fellow citizens through this man’s intelligence, which they thought deserved to be remembered, but it seemed appropriate to him to let drop. Consequently, he avoided the spots where literary gatherings normally take place, in order not to blush when praised. 10. Still nobler is the fact that he carries home no personal gain from his dealings with governors, even though he wouldn’t need to importune to achieve it, but he would need *not* to dishonour those who ask to give. He seems more capable of enduring starvation than profiting from questionable sources! More than anyone else I know, he considers it a gain not to be making profits. 11. Impressive as he is, he counts you a better man than himself, and he prays that his children become like you. So great is the spell that if one of the gods should ask, ‘Clematius, we’ve decided to share immortality with you, but we’re rather fearful that you may get it and then ask to grant it to another. Answer whether it’s enough for you alone to receive it.’ I think that, when he had heard this, if it were not permitted to receive it with you, he himself wouldn’t wish to receive it. 12. That’s the extent to which, in my view, you’ve won over the noble Clematius, and he’s delighted to agree that he has devoted himself to you. When you two get

5 Datianus 1, a powerful courtier under Constantius II who had property and great influence in Antioch. Cf. B50–51 (to Datianus). The location of his baths is unknown, but Antioch was well-equipped with baths, some of which were covered, while others were in open air, cf. *Or.* 11.220.

6 Proverbial for friendship and frequently cited by Libanius. Heracles had rescued Theseus from imprisonment in the Underworld, while Theseus rescued Heracles and offered him asylum in Athens after he had gone temporarily mad and killed his family. The main source for the myth is Euripides’ *Heracles*.

7 Cf. *Ep.* 430.10/N11 for jokes that they were the ‘inseparables’, as Libanius concedes here in §6.

8 Strategius Musonianus, Prefect of the East, 354–58.

9 Palladius 4, a *notarius* and *magister officiorum* under Gallus, 351/4.

together, see to it that you don't stir up the emperor with the usual remarks, 'Let the sophist return! Let him not delay! Let him not stay there! Let him be in Thrace!'¹⁰ 13. You laugh at my words, you hard-hearted ones, but I'm sorry, if I'll be obliged, because of my friends' overzealousness, to fall into the mire while fleeing the cold. What the 'mire' means, Clematius will teach you.¹¹

26. TO PALLADIUS

(Carried by Antiochus to court in Milan, winter 355/6) F440 W1187

B26 is addressed to Palladius 4, a senior *notarius* and *magister officiorum* under Gallus, 351/4. He was influential at court under Constantius, but was condemned by the Commission of Chalcedon and banished to Britain in 361 because of his role in the downfall of Gallus. Libanius writes on behalf of Antiochus ii, the 'agonothete' for the Olympic games of Antioch to be held in summer 356 (cf. note on B1). He and Pompeianus ii were on embassy to court, first, to request an imperial subvention for the games and, second, to help secure permission that Libanius be allowed to remain in Antioch. On the embassy, see Liebeschuetz (1972), 266.

1. I ask each of those returning from there about your physical condition. About your soul, of course, I wouldn't ask whether it was noble – that I would assert to others! 2. I take pleasure in hearing that you're in good health and, in addition, I'm amazed if *you*, despite knowing that ill-health is such an evil thing and certainly a matter demanding rest, are depriving *me* of this rest when I'm engulfed by illnesses. For the man who can prevent such orders being issued about me and yet himself allows them to be issued is the one who is applying compulsion. 3. But, gentlest of men, do not disregard me being dragged from my bed, and do our excellent emperor the favour that nothing unworthy of his judgement be done against a man who has often sung his praises. 4. For my fellow-citizen Antiochus, who is wearing the Olympian crown from the games, be all in all in the belief that by doing so you're benefiting the city and delighting the mind of Zeus more than those Greeks did who sang a hymn to Apollo around Troy!¹²

10 Nearly another year would pass before Libanius secured permission to remain in Antioch.

11 The allusion to the 'mire' is unclear.

12 After returning his daughter to Chryses, priest of Apollo, the Achaeans spent the day in sacrifices and hymns to assuage Apollo's anger, cf. *Iliad* 1.472ff.

27. TO CLEMATIUS

(Carried by Spectatus en route to court in Milan, summer 356) F514 W428

Clematius 2, the imperial courier recommended in B25, had been sent to spy on Persian defences in summer 355 and was returning to court in Milan in 356. The letter alludes also to the negotiations for peace undertaken in 356 between the Prefect Strategius and the Persian Tamsapor. The letter-bearer Spectatus has participated in the diplomatic efforts that produced a truce which endured until the unsuccessful embassy to Persia in 358 (cf. B6) and the outbreak of war in 359 (Ammianus 16.9.2–3). Clematius and Spectatus clearly know one another already. Both were in some sense specialists in Persian affairs.

1. You have in hand Spectatus, whom you prayed to catch hold of! Now, don't go all weak at the sight of him, but carry out everything you threatened to do: shouting, drawing him to you, hugging him, kissing him fervently, for you know how to take punishment of that sort from *him*! 2. He has arrived to you with enhanced dignity, after making peace and seating those dangerous bowmen in our theatre,¹³ so that it's likely that he'll be elevated in the emperor's esteem, achieving greater influence through his judgement of the situation. 3. If he's telling the truth in claiming that you're his friend and that he'll not fail in any request to the emperor, there'll be no obstacle to what you desire. If you must exploit the present opportunity, he needs to shake off sleep and rouse himself!

28. TO EUPHEMIUS

(Sent to Tarsus, summer 356) F529 W443

By summer 356, Libanius had been in Antioch for a year and a half. Here he reports to Euphemius 2, a former pupil with a post under the *comes sacrarum largitionum* (cf. B13), on his situation in Antioch: his students, declamations, and his difficult relations with the Prefect, Strategius Musonianus.

1. I believed that your kinsman¹⁴ would be for me the source of no harm and, rather, many good things, but he persisted in doing something by which I might have been harmed a great deal. When he was with me, he didn't send you my letters, although he took many from me, and you obviously haven't received what I gave him when he departed. Let him explain the reason for

13 An allusion to Persian ambassadors in Antioch.

14 Unknown.

which he called down such retribution on himself, for he'll not deny the fact that this wasn't right. 2. My affairs stand as follows: much work, some with the boys, some involving frequent declamations. In addition, there's the fact that I'm always ill. Although I've been living all this time in the hands of doctors, I'm not yet at the end of my illness. 3. My fellow citizens are favourably disposed to me, except for one,¹⁵ and the real orators among the advocates are with me, while those who might harm my reputation if they *were* with me, are living it up with others, 'eating a great deal of meat and drinking the wine-bowls' of the marvellous sophist.¹⁶ 4. Concerning the man with whom I ought rightly to have great weight, more than anyone, I'm weaker than anyone. I know that I seem to have influence, but I don't have even a little. Even though that doesn't appear credible now, it'll be apparent to you in a little while.¹⁷

29. TO BARBATIO

(Carried by Clematius to court in Milan, winter 355/6) F436 W1032

B29–30 are addressed to the military officer Barbatio, characterised by Ammianus as a 'boorish fellow of arrogant disposition, and hated by many' (18.3.6). He held the rank of Master of the Infantry (*magister peditum*) from 355 until his condemnation and execution in 359. He is an unlikely correspondent for Libanius, but the latter was desperate in winter 355/6 to secure approval for his move to Antioch and reached out to a number of unlikely patrons. The pretext of the present letter is the entrance of a young kinsman of Barbatio into Libanius' school. Seeck, *BLZG* 94 and 168, assumed that the phrase 'your Gessius' alluded to a son of Barbatio, but Libanius does not specify the relationship, which is itself unusual, and the reserved tone of this and later letters to Barbatio leads me to infer that Gessius was a kinsman, not a son. In letters to pupils' fathers, formalities are dropped, since, in Libanius' view, he and the father have an instant bond in guardianship of the young man. The wish expressed in

15 Eubulus 2, a powerful councillor and rival of the faction of Phasganius, and thus supporter of Acacius 6, Libanius' sophistic rival. Eubulus remained hostile to Libanius long after the death of Phasganius and the departure of Acacius.

16 The quotation is from *Iliad* 8.231. The 'marvellous sophist' is Acacius 6, Libanius' principal sophistic rival, said here to entertain in great extravagance advocates hostile to Libanius. He left Antioch in 361. On Acacius, see Martin and Petit (1979), 236–37.

17 Libanius rarely alludes to the governor of Syria, who was completely overshadowed by the presence in Antioch of the Praetorian Prefect. The allusion will be to the Prefect Strategius Musonianus. In the *Autobiography* (*Or.* 1.106–16), Libanius papers over the cracks in his rapport with Strategius, but the letters suggest that he experienced frequent bouts of unpleasantness in his dealings with the Prefect, e.g. B54 and *ep.* 476/N16

ep. 491, ‘may your sons be ranked before others in the learning of the Muses’ implies that they are studying elsewhere. *Ep.* 491 from spring 356 also asserts that Barbatio did help secure approval for the move to Antioch, but he corresponded only with Phasganius, not Libanius.

1. I had long since considered you a good man because of Themistocles’¹⁸ friendship for you, since that man wouldn’t befriend anyone who wasn’t exceedingly good! During my previous stay here,¹⁹ I spent little time with you and didn’t put myself forward as much as I ought to have done, since my body was ailing and you had little leisure, for you oversaw very important affairs.²⁰ 2. But now that your Gessius is my pupil and entrusted to your kinsmen,²¹ I don’t suppose that I’m in the wrong in enrolling myself among your associates, especially as Clematius urges me and promises that I’ll not regret the letter. Knowing you very well and not unacquainted with me, he said that we would enjoy a kind of noble harmony with one another. 3. The trophies you set up from the barbarians, leading the forces yourself while following the emperor’s Fortune, have become known everywhere and admired everywhere, and the expectations are that you’ll soon create more trophies and, as you move forward, you’ll have no need for trophies²² – no need for battle even! 4. It’s a fine thing if we, who must celebrate whatever you accomplish, hear from the doers themselves what they’re doing!

30. TO BARBATIO

(Carried by Letoius to court in Rome, early spring 357) F556 W470

In spring 357, Letoius i, a prominent Antiochene councillor and close family friend with a son in Libanius’ school (*ep.* 550), served on the embassy representing Antioch at the celebration of Constantius II’s Vicennalia in Rome. Such embassies involved great personal expense and much time and inconvenience. Libanius’ uncle Phasganius had been slated for the task, but felt incapable of making the journey due to ill-health. Letoius served in his place, earning deep gratitude from Libanius, who

18 Seeck (*BLZG* 307) identifies Themistocles with the philosopher from Athens to whom Libanius wrote *ep.* 406, evoking a dinner party in Constantinople with the doctor Olympius 4 and the philosopher Themistius 1.

19 An allusion to Libanius’ temporary visit to Antioch in 353 before his permanent transfer in 354.

20 Barbatio had been *comes domesticorum* under Gallus (351/4).

21 I infer that Gessius is living with a family in Antioch to whom both he and Barbatio are related.

22 In time, constant success will produce victory, peace and an end to battle trophies.

supplied him with ten letters of introduction (*epp.* 550–59) for friends and acquaintances stretching from Nicomedia to Rome. Five letters are available in English: *epp.* 552/N22, 556/B30, 557/N23, 558/B32, 559/B31.

1. It seems a riddle to people that you shirk not a single task on my behalf, yet you don't add to your deeds a letter, which is such an easy task! 2. Those whom I can deceive, I tell that I also receive letters, but to those by whom I'd be cross-examined, if I should pretend, I say that it befits you to act, me to write, and I don't believe I'm saying anything inappropriate. 3. Even before I couldn't bear this punishment with composure, but when I heard that Clematius had arrived and that not even through him could I get a letter, I can scarcely describe my distress. For he'd said that he would do this for me immediately upon seeing you – and he lied! If it slipped his mind, there's still hope, but if he overlooked nothing – but I won't say anything unpleasant. 4. Letoius is among those who think of you as I do. For he would wish you to prosper, and he's friendly to whoever praises you. He prays with you, as Antioch prays with him, for he never harmed her in any way and he often brought her pleasure from the use of his ancestral wealth. So, send the man away rejoicing, as if you were honouring our commonwealth in him.

31. TO EUGNOMONIUS

(Carried by Letoius to court in Rome, early spring 357) F559 W473

Eugnomonius had been a fellow student with Libanius in Athens and later a chancellery official, perhaps *magister epistularum graecarum* in 357–58. As B31 makes clear, he was the author of the Greek version of the imperial letter inviting the cities to send delegations to Constantius II's Vicennalia in Rome in spring 357. In B31, Libanius asks that he give a cordial reception to the Antiochene delegate, Letoius i.

1. Do you still recall the 'bitch' and the 'old hag' and what you used to call Socrates – all those times we had in Athens? Or have you grown proud towards me and have nothing to say of the old times? 2. For my part, I'm delighted at your eloquence, all the more for the following reason. When the letter arrived, the one in which the emperor invited the city to the festivities, listen to what happened with people here. 3. I came out of the school around noon, and some of those who had heard the letter and who have an appreciation for eloquence happened upon me and said, 'We heard your letter!' 'What do you mean "mine"?' I said. 'By Zeus,' they replied, 'it was exactly the sort of thing you work up!' And they proceeded to praise its beauty and

the fact that this beauty was not marred by excessive length. Now to my mind this conferred some honour on *me*, but you must yourself consider whether it involves some insult to *you*! 4. Assist Letoius, insofar as you are able, and encourage others to help. For he is well born, he has his share of literary culture, and he is distinguished for his public service. He has good sense, a just mind, and he knows how to repay a favour as well as receive one. Finally, and what you desire most of all, he is to me like a bulwark and a bodyguard.

32. TO MUSONIUS

(Carried by Letoius to court in Rome, spring 357) F558 W472

B32–33 offer a good example of a ‘failed’ correspondence, that is, an epistolary overture made by Libanius to a high official who fails to respond. Libanius naturally preferred not to write ‘cold’ to high officials, in order to avoid the embarrassment of being snubbed, but examples do exist, particularly in 355–56 when Libanius reached out to many potential supporters in his desire to secure imperial approval for his return to Antioch. In the present instance, he had been encouraged by his cousin Spectatus to write to Musonius 1, *magister officiorum* (356–57) and he penned this letter of introduction for Letoius i, who himself attached great importance to Musonius’ goodwill, cf. *ep.* 557.6/N23.

1. Although it occurred to me even before to write to you – the praises sung about your nature persuaded me of this too – I was deterred by the thought that it was presumptuous to write before meeting you. 2. But since Spectatus has written that there is at your side some place for a recollection of me, and that, if I should write, it will be to an eager recipient, I quickly complied, considering it a gain, if you should *not* accuse me of rashness, and no harm if you should, since Spectatus will pay for it! 3. But one must hope for the best. For you are without doubt the man who has saved Hellas²³ and now you have opened the palace to eloquence. And I am also myself perhaps, if not one of those who fashion beautiful speeches, one of those, at least, who love beautiful speeches, so that it’s likely that the letter and the letter-bearer will meet with a kindly reception from you. 4. Although it is absurd to write on behalf of someone else before learning how my writing to you at all will turn out for me, nonetheless, one must be bold – so be all in all for Letoius for the sake of me, the brazen one!

23 As Proconsul of Achaea prior to 357.

33. TO MUSONIUS

(Carried by Olympius to the court as it travelled to Sirmium, summer 357)

F604 W519

Before receiving a reply to B32, Libanius was solicited by Olympius 6, an old schoolmate and imperial courier (*agens in rebus*) who had apparently not reported to his supervisor, the *magister officiorum*, for a long time and feared the consequences. Libanius wrote on his behalf, making the appropriate apologies and requesting tactfully that Olympius receive some good assignment with profitable perquisites. Musonius apparently did not respond, since Libanius did not write again.

1. I think that my letter²⁴ has been handed to you and that yours will be reaching me, and even before receiving it, I'm delighted since I'm confident that I will receive it! Now, don't regard it as astonishing if I've added a second letter before learning the opinion you formed of the first one. I've convinced myself of what I most want, and perhaps I'm not such a bad prophet, for I'm calculating that you are kindly, and a lover and maker of speeches. 2. You have toiled much to help many others, particularly those involved in oratory, some of whom you honoured because you found them to be good, while others who were not so good you pitied, doing the former out of correct judgement, the latter out of the goodness of your nature. 3. So what sense would it have made for a man like you – gentle, ready of speech, and resolute in action – not to share a letter with someone who had ventured to write, particularly when the noble Mygdonius²⁵ was at your side encouraging you, or rather, not prompting you but praising your beginning? These things have made me prophetic about the letter from there. What I would reasonably do after receiving it, I think I ought to do now with good hopes. 4. I've tried before to enlist your influence for others, but Olympius will be the first to enjoy it – that's the best way to put it.²⁶ This Olympius is my fellow citizen along with many people, but he is my friend in preference to many. The same school received us as children. Then by some ill luck he was driven away from learning and became an imperial courier, and one not so very fortunate. 5. At any rate, he hasn't to this day tasted those things, which quickly make the imperial courier blessed, so that if he didn't know how to

²⁴ B32.

²⁵ A former imperial official who had taken an interest in Libanius in Athens in 340 and had loyally supported him when he was expelled from Constantinople in 352 (*ep.* 557/N23). *Ep.* 603 requests that Mygdonius intervene with Musonius on behalf of Olympius 6, suggesting that Mygdonius still has influence at court.

²⁶ Apparently, Musonius had not been helpful to Letoius i, cf. B32.

endure poverty, he would perhaps have found a use for the river here.²⁷ Dawdling here and wasting time, he then added to his delay out of fear. 6. I roused him up, encouraging him and proclaiming publicly that he won't be punished, rather he'll receive something good. So you are in a position to enrol me among the class of prophets.

34. TO EUGNOMONIUS

(Sent to court at Sirmium, summer 358) F382 W385

B34 also concerns the Olympius 6 discussed in B33. The current letter was sent to court a year later to the chancellery official, Eugnomonius, who had failed to respond to Libanius' overture to him in B31. Libanius asks for no specific favour, but Olympius presumably needs assistance in an assignment that will improve his financial situation.

1. I knew you as a friend of mine and no less zealous towards friends than Theseus,²⁸ but after sending you a letter and receiving no reply, I'm looking to see what sort of man you'll prove to be if action is called for, when you didn't even dare send a letter, despite the fact that your title is derived from letter-writing! 2. Now if your wealth has made you contemptuous of your acquaintances, then may your wealth perish! But if you're the same towards others and have only changed towards me, then consider that perhaps we shall meet some day and when you look for an excuse, you'll either be silent or you'll behave shamelessly. 3. But, good sir, dispel the blame by a letter conveying something of your former character, so that we may not only count you blessed, but praise you as well. In particular, assist this worthy fellow Olympius and encourage others to do so. 4. The man is my fellow citizen and was a schoolmate of mine in youth. But out of his desire to become an imperial courier he neglected the better part of his rhetorical studies. But you, at any rate, will think him worthy of honour, as if he had guarded his rhetorical skill, and you'll show him forth as one of those who fares well. 5. Now if you didn't have the influence, I would pray that you did. But now, since you do, I'm perhaps not unjustified in wanting to enjoy it. Your reward from me and from him will be the recollection of the favour.

²⁷ He would have drowned himself in the Orontes.

²⁸ On Theseus as a friend, see note on B25.7.

35. TO BASSUS

(Sent to court in Sirmium, spring 358) F366 W369

Libanius interceded twice at court on behalf of an old family friend, Quirinus, who had enrolled his young son, Honoratus 3, in the corps of notaries with the expectation that he would take up his post on finishing his studies. In 358, the emperor ordered all members of palatine bureaux to present themselves in person at court or be struck from the official lists. Libanius wrote to his cousin Spectatus and to Bassus 5, head of the notaries (*primicerius notariorum*), in winter 357/8 (*epp.* 358 and 359/N28) and then again in spring 358 (*epp.* 365/B5 and 366/B35). It is worth comparing the two letters to Bassus, *epp.* 359/N28 and 366/B35, since the later letter (*ep.* 366/B35 translated here) treats the same themes as the earlier letter, but in a less artful, less personal way, and without any allusion to *ep.* 359. Libanius writes as if Bassus had never received or had mislaid the first letter. Libanius might hope for success in this case, since Bassus' son, Calliopius iii, was Libanius' pupil from 355 to 358 and overlapped in his studies with Honoratus, a pupil from 354 to 358.

1. I both loved and assisted your son when he was present, and now that he's absent, I do at least one of the two, since I haven't ceased to love him! You too seem to me, after discovering learning in him, to feel gratitude towards the one who imparted it. 2. There's proof of this: repayment passes from you – great repayment, from a gentleman's point of view at least. Letters are what I'm calling 'repayment'!²⁹ It's possible for you to add to this compensation by presenting me with a gift – none would be easier for you, none greater for me. 3. You probably know Quirinus, whose learning had placed him on a sophist's throne, until Fortune led him off to governors' thrones. I'm speaking of that man who served as an assessor to Philip, who aided Lycia, has saved Pamphylia, and who guided Cyprus.³⁰ 4. He has a child named Honoratus, whom, if you should also consider him my own, you'll not go wrong. This youth has been enrolled in your chorus, but at the moment he's singing in mine,³¹ and he'll surely be better for that one after the songs in this one! He'll arrive, I imagine, at that time when he's very fast at writing³² and accomplished at speaking. His youth, I suspect, causes his

29 An allusion to a letter or letters from Bassus while his son was studying with Libanius.

30 Quirinus had served as assessor to Fl. Philippus 7, Prefect of the East (344–51) and as governor of three different provinces: Lycia, Pamphylia and Cyprus. Summoned for office by Honoratus 2, Prefect of the Gauls in 355/7, he declined due to the illness of his son Honoratus 3.

31 Libanius often refers to his students as a 'chorus'. Bassus' chorus is the corps of *notarii*.

32 Honoratus is studying stenography as well as rhetoric.

parents anxiety.³³ 5. He's not the only one absent, but perhaps he's the only one absent for a noble reason. Respect and honour the reason by granting him a place on the roster of young men, which will show him to be ahead of many others. In exchange for this, you'll have from me the only thing I possess – recognition of the favour in lengthy speeches!

36. TO FLORENTIUS

(Carried by Spectatus to court in Milan, ?autumn 356) F510 W424

B35–41 (cf. B4) are addressed to or concern Florentius 3, the acting *magister officiorum* in 355 and full *magister officiorum* in 359–61. He was from a distinguished Antiochene family; his father Nigridianus had been consul in 350. Although Libanius had not known him earlier, Spectatus once again encouraged Libanius to make an overture and Florentius proved an obliging and reliable patron at court (cf. B39), thus offering a good contrast to the previous *magister officiorum*, Musonius 1 (cf. B32–33 and the critique at B39.11 of the venality of Florentius' predecessors). Florentius was condemned by the Commission of Chalcedon and exiled in 361, unjustly in the view of Ammianus (22.3.6).

1. Having spent little time with you due to my preoccupation with oratorical pursuits, I maintain that I've been harmed in that I haven't been very long among your close acquaintances and now I'm hunting for friendship through a letter, not that I may reap a benefit from your influence, for that would be characteristic of a businessman and not a man eager for friendship, but rather in order that a man who is a gentleman should not elude me and that I should not be engulfed amid praises of you, while being unable to say that a man such as you is my friend. 2. Rest assured, you seem to the majority of people fortunate for other blessings – I'm speaking of your family, certainly, and your wealth, and the rank to which you've ascended.³⁴ Although I don't belittle these things either, I count it a blessing to know how to be self-controlled in the midst of these things and to meet with great acclamation. For it's difficult for a man of your station to get everyone to be favourable, since it's inevitable that a man in power will also cause some people pain. 3. But to this day I've heard praise of you and nothing else, and may I not hear anything else! 4. In praying that you remain good, I'm also

³³ Libanius implies that he is too young to be at court on his own. Honoratus was also ill at the time, though Libanius makes no mention of it here.

³⁴ Florentius had been acting *magister officiorum* in 355. He did not hold office in 356, but remained at court.

praying with the noble Spectatus. For he and I have been to one another what Heracles and Theseus³⁵ were to one another, so that what is good for one is good for both. 5. May it be your way as a gentleman to repay a letter with a letter. But if that is burdensome, certainly to be willing to be a friend involves no labour, so that if you are friendly, even though you don't write, it will be enough.

37. TO FLORENTIUS

(Sent to court in Sirmium, winter 358/9) F351 W354

This letter appears to have been written before Florentius was appointed *magister officiorum* (359–61).

1. My tasks are many and scarcely allow me to catch my breath: a throng of youths at school, at home the task of composition, friends' troubles needing assistance – some things are resolved, others unsettled. 2. This quantity of business often prevented me from taking meals, and perhaps I've even been careless about my eating due to lack of leisure, but nothing has either expelled nor quenched the memory of the noble Florentius, rather this blooms in me and there also flourishes in me the habit of speaking of you as at a festival – praising your gentleness, your constancy of character, your sharpness of mind, the fact that Truth is honoured, and the fact that good men are in the positions they deserve. 3. I sing of such things and contend with whoever claims to say more, but the most important thing is that there's greater pleasure in saying some very fine thing about you than in meeting with praise from others. Each man has counted you before himself in this way. 4. Now, it would be sweeter to be able to see one another, but neither is the second best choice³⁶ trivial, namely to send and receive a letter. You alone, even when you don't write, do not cause grief. For this isn't at all a sign of change, rather you, even when silent, allow your friends to take heart, since your judgement remains unaltered.

35 On the friendship of Heracles and Theseus, see note on B25.7.

36 Literally, the 'second voyage', a favourite saying of Libanius and often used of letters as a second-best substitute for the physical presence of friends. When the wind fails, sailors take to their oars and make a 'second voyage'. Cf. Plato, *Phaedo* 99c; *Philebus* 19c; Aristotle, *Politics* 1284b, 19.

38. TO FLORENTIUS

(Sent to court in Sirmium, summer 359) F48 W46

The *magister officiorum*, Florentius 3, and Spectatus have approached the emperor with a proposal that Libanius be invited to speak at court in Constantinople. Libanius begs off due to ill-health, accusing Spectatus of knowingly seeking a favour that cannot be accepted, simply in order to cover for his other failings.

1. May many good things happen for you because of your enthusiasm on my behalf, but you appear to have absolutely forgotten my physical condition³⁷ when you order such things! I'm that fellow for whom it involves some toil even to make a dash into the city square, for what comes as a delight to others is for me a marathon³⁸ due to my weakness. 2. I'd have the strength to *pray* to travel to you, but I wouldn't have the strength to travel to you – any more than I could attempt the open sea without a ship. And it's not just that I wouldn't be able to run to the Illyrians or Thrace,³⁹ but even if you were residing in Cilicia and tried to rouse me, you wouldn't be stronger than Necessity. 3. Although Spectatus also knew this, he persuaded you to say those things about me to the emperor and to point out to me the discussions that had taken place, so that he himself might seem to be leaving nothing undone and that my physical condition might be held responsible for nothing having been done! 4. Well, may Spectatus not cease to play in the midst of his friends' serious concerns. I shall remain here and shall not be neglectful of my songs. And if our worthy emperor should ever appear for us,⁴⁰ perhaps I'll look upon him not in silence.

39. TO FLORENTIUS

(Carried by Priscianus to court in Sirmium, autumn 359) F61 W59

B39 thanks Florentius for summoning to court Priscianus 1, a schoolmate, close friend and frequent correspondent of Libanius, who wrote him 37 letters between 355 and 365. An advocate from Berytus, he was appointed governor of Euphratensis (360–61), later governor of Cilicia (363–64) and Palestina Prima (364). This letter

37 After the death of his uncle Phasganius, itself following hard on the deaths of his mother and Aristaenetus, Libanius suffered a breakdown, aggravated by chronic ill-health.

38 Literally, 'sweet elbow', an allusion to a particularly long and arduous bend in the Nile. Cf. Plato, *Phaedrus* 257d.

39 The 'Illyrians' refers to the court at Sirmium, 'Thrace' to Constantinople.

40 Constantius arrived in Antioch in December 360, but Libanius never addressed him.

implies that Florentius was Priscianus' principal promoter on the consistory, the emperor's advisory body through which all appointments of provincial governors had to pass, before being given formal approval by the emperor. Presumably, men were not normally summoned to court before their appointments were confirmed, but occasionally a man could make the journey to court only to find that his bid for office had foundered. Libanius wrote to Themistius as well about Priscianus, cf. *ep.* 62/N51.

1. When your letter arrived summoning Priscianus, the dearest of all my friends, there was much talk in the city to the effect that you were making him greater than our hopes, and crowding round the man they counted him fortunate, each man becoming a prophet of his future rank. 2. In my view, however, what had been done was absolutely to be expected, for I knew you to be a good man, and it would have been remarkable for such a man *not* to do such things! But while I counted blessed (as did the others) the man who was summoned, I also thought it necessary to count blessed *you* as the adviser, and the emperor who took your advice and our own city. 3. For to promote worthy people to positions of power brings praise on the promoters themselves no less than on the recipient of the honour, as Jason, for example, was seen to possess intelligence when he invited Heracles on board the Argo. Who would not have rejoiced in Heracles' ability to preserve them and in Jason's clear-sightedness in picking a crew? 4. In the present instance, this Heracles [Priscianus] will perform whatever task you set him in a manner fully worthy of praise. Sharing in that praise will be both Florentius, for planting the idea (and for knowing how to act rather than prattle!) and the emperor, sustainer of the world, for being persuaded. 5. Our citizenry has been honoured as well. Though Priscianus was born elsewhere, the reason for which he's admired arose from *my* city, which embraced him as a lover of learning and sent him forth him packed with learning. A single wine-bowl would be set up for us and together we drank.⁴¹ 6. For this reason, his prayers were with me when I would engage in declamations, while I would leap up when he prevailed in court cases, which he pursued with such purity of motive that, in the judges' minds, his nod was as good as written law! 7. That a man pleading in court should speak with care is no great deal, but Priscianus would seem to speak carefully in any circumstance or place, or on any topic whatsoever, so convinced is he that there is no time when neglect of one's language is appropriate. 8. The beauty of his character surpasses the

41 Former schoolmates are said to have 'drunk from the same wine-bowl', cf. *ep.* 355, 1272.

bloom of his language. He has now come into grey hair, but even before reaching manhood he displayed the characteristics of mature men, in various respects but in particular by his mastery of speech, just as Anacharsis⁴² commanded. Nowadays the utterance of things which are rightly kept silent would no more escape him than a statue! 9. But you'll think that I'm going on to you for no good reason, since you're aware of his qualities and have summoned him. I said these things not to teach you about his character, but rather to indicate that the nurse [Antioch] shares in what happens and will happen to her charge through you. 10. By presenting him before all of us as spectators and by gratifying the people through his speaking ability, change our man's situation and bring him to a rank that's fitting for you and him, and don't stop employing good men. 11. By this alone, you would surpass those who have occupied the same office that you do now, for the name is the same and the power is equal, but while they have set out in pursuit of money, you ought to show yourself as a man who bestows distinction on those who are no strangers to virtue. For it will be a fine thing in later years if there are songs for some men's wealth, but for your discernment.

40. TO SPECTATUS

(Sent to court in Sirmium, summer/autumn 359) F64 W62

In B40, Libanius relents and thanks his cousin Spectatus for his own role in the promotion of Priscianus 1.

1. Thucydides says that a complaint is dispelled by a favour, whenever one man has wronged another and later does something for him according to his wishes.⁴³ First, you wronged me by neglecting me, and then you wronged me by curing evil with evil, preparing a journey for me more difficult, as it were, than a pit of destruction!⁴⁴ 2. But while I had these complaints on my hands and was calling what was being done 'hostility', the favour arrived which put an end to my accusations and persuaded me to praise you. So I pour a libation for you and claim that you know not only how to laugh but

42 Philhellenic Scythian prince of 6th century BC, famous for wisdom. Cf. Herodotus 4.76.

43 Thucydides 1.42.3.

44 The 'pit' at Athens into which condemned criminals were thrown. Cf. Herodotus 7.133; Aristophanes, *Clouds* 1450. The 'neglect' alludes to Spectatus' failure to act on behalf of Quirinus and Honoratus 3 (cf. B5 and 35). The journey worse than the 'pit' is the invitation to court discussed in B38. The favour is his (presumed) efforts on behalf of Priscianus with the *magister officiorum* Florentius.

also how to apply yourself quite diligently for the sake of your friends. 3. Do you want to know what benefaction we have enjoyed? Priscianus has been honoured with the appropriate honour! Florentius has sung a noble opening song by summoning those who know how to speak rather than those who know how to pay out money. For just as trophies glorify those in arms, so the promotion to power of those who will use power well glorifies a man in Florentius' position. In whatever Priscianus undertakes, he'll confer a better reputation on the man who handed him the opportunities, for he'll everywhere employ good sense. 4. Florentius will feel gratitude for Priscianus when the latter shows himself ready for any task he is assigned. But now we in the city feel gratitude to Florentius and to you, for it's clear that Theseus has laid hold of his prize.⁴⁵ But you see to it that to the praise for the summons there is added the action for which he has been summoned!

41. TO FLORENTIUS

(Carried by Parthenius to court, autumn 359) F72 W70

On the Parthenius recommended in B41, see introduction to B8. Libanius hopes that Parthenius will secure a governorship through the patronage of the *magister officiorum*.

1. You'll hear many reports from many men praising this Parthenius, reports which you won't distrust, nor will you reply that the man ought not to be assisted, and I've added this letter, not because those reports won't suffice, but because it would be shameful for me alone to be silent about him! I prayed that such an opportunity would arise on his behalf, so how would it not be an injustice if I fail to use the present opportunity for his sake? 2. Parthenius is my concern because of the obligations of a shared homeland, but he's also my concern due to the fact that he's top notch among my friends. 3. His uncle was Eusebius⁴⁶ and it's clear that whatever I undertake on Parthenius' behalf, I've done as a favour to the departed uncle. But even without these considerations, he deserves my concern because of his very character: *he* would walk through fire to help a friend and he stands in the way of a friend going astray, not knowing how to flatter but knowing how to criticise like a free man, and through intelligence he's able to elude dangers

⁴⁵ In B39.4 Priscianus was compared to Heracles. Here he is compared to Theseus and his political office is called a 'prize'.

⁴⁶ Eusebius ix, a close family friend of Libanius, whose death in 359 is mentioned in conjunction with those of his dearest relations, Phasganius and his mother (*Or.* 1.118).

arising from injustice while, through the grace of his nature, he's able to make a literary discussion more pleasant, and he practises dispensing wealth rather than acquiring it. 4. I can attest to this from the experience I've had in his actions towards me. 5. As for the man about whom it's possible to say these things, if he should govern cities,⁴⁷ he would, I think, maintain his practice and close up the mouths of those who are happy to find fault. 6. So I do the only thing that is in my power – I add my prayer that such things befall Parthenius as he deserves because of his ancestors, but for those with the power to take action, it would be possible to make the prayer for these things a fact.

42. TO EUPHEMIUS

(Spring 360) F185 W185

Libanius requests of Euphemius 2, a former pupil who held a post under the *comes sacrarum largitionum* (358/64), that he release a staff member, Quirinus ii, so that the man can give away his daughter in marriage to Rufinus 3, a close friend of Libanius and member of the Praetorian Prefect's staff. The chief interest of this informal note is its amusing allusion to the 'usual this and that' one must listen to when requests are denied.

1. Rufinus⁴⁸ is a kinsman of the excellent Olympius,⁴⁹ a friend of mine (since he imitates his kinsman), and top of the corps⁵⁰ around the prefect. Quirinus⁵¹ (he's one of your staff members) wishes to give his daughter in marriage to Rufinus – he intends it, but he is about to be under orders for he is stationed in Beroea. Now you, along with Zeus god of marriage, can make the marriage happen if you're willing to release Quirinus for just a few days. You ought to help Marriage so that the god's second efforts on your behalf will be better. But don't write the usual this and that, your lack of leisure and how it isn't possible and the customary things you say, for I'm asking not to hear that you've failed to release the man, but that you see the man himself after his release.

47 As a provincial governor.

48 Rufinus 3, close friend of Libanius and staff member to the Praetorian Prefect of the East in 360.

49 Olympius 3, Antiochene and life-long friend of Libanius.

50 Rufinus may be the Prefect's chief of staff (*princeps officii*), but Libanius' expression (ὄπιπερ κεφάλαιον) is very informal, used also of the young Faustinus in B77. Rufinus is 'tops' on the staff.

51 Quirinus ii, one of Euphemius' staff members resident in Beroea.

43. TO ANATOLIUS

(Carried by Olympius en route to Mt Casius, summer 362) F739 W651

B43 is the only letter to Anatolius 5, Julian's *magister libellorum* in Gaul and later *magister officiorum* (360–63). He became acquainted with Libanius at court in Antioch in summer 362. The letter alludes to Julian's intention to climb Mt Casius south of the city in order to sacrifice at the temple of Zeus (Ammianus 22.14.4). Libanius intended to participate in the journey, but, as invariably happened, the prospect of travel induced a medical crisis. Libanius had offered to introduce his friend Olympius 3 to Anatolius, but was forced to supply him with this letter of introduction instead. Anatolius died in battle on Julian's Persian campaign.

1. May it be yours to sacrifice with good omens and to encounter the gods, the leader of the Muses and the god who protects the mountain,⁵² for as you know, it's being said that the emperor will make the ascent there and think the difficult road easy, if it should place him before an altar. I should have shared in the journey, prayers, and sacred rites, and looked upon the emperor's beard by which he adorns the purple,⁵³ but Fortune did not think that way – rather she dealt me a blow such as never before. 2. I'd recount it to you if you didn't have with you the worthy Olympius, who'll speak better than a letter can and who has also wept with me, extended his hand to me and knows everything. 3. He is that man whom you were ready to enrol among your friends when I praised him, and you urged me to introduce the fellow to you. The vine arbour also knows these things, under which we would engage in discussion as we strolled about, having as much cover from it as one would have from a roof! 4. Well, Olympius pressed me, shouting to introduce him, but I was prevented by myriad ills. However, since he hears that whoever has spent a little time with you departs the wiser, he cannot bear the punishment and he's asked for the next best thing⁵⁴ – a letter of mine instead of me – and I was certainly not minded to refuse. 5. It would be your task to make the 'next best' no worse for him than the best, so that he may rejoice and my letter may be honoured.

52 Apollo, leader of the Muses, and Zeus, guardian of Mt Casius.

53 Julian's philosopher's beard was a target of the lampoons of the Antiochene public. He responded by publishing on the door of the palace his *Misopogon* ('The Beard-hater'). Libanius' explicit reference to so controversial an issue is a display of loyalty to the emperor.

54 See note at B38.4.

44. TO CAESARIUS

(Carried by Polycarp to Constantinople, April–June 363) F1399 W1454

Caesarius 1, the recipient of B44–48, was a member of an extended, prominent clan in Tarsus with whom Libanius had close ties. His father, Julianus 14, and his uncles, Demetrius 2 and Hierocles 3, had all been provincial governors and his brother, Alypius 4, had served as *vicarius* of Britain 358–60. Julian valued Alypius' work, brought him on the march east against Constantius and eventually entrusted him with the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem. Alypius may have played an important role too in securing posts for his brother and father. Caesarius 1 was appointed by Julian *vicarius Asianaë* (mid-362 to mid-363), while his father, Julianus, was given the post of tax assessor (*censitor*) in Bithynia (362), a difficult job requiring strict probity. Julian's death was a setback for this family of cultured 'Hellenes'. In writing B44 to Caesarius in April–June 363, Libanius could hold out the hope of the 'highest office', that is, a Praetorian Prefecture, but Julian's death changed the political landscape.

B44 is the last of four letters written to Caesarius as *vicarius* of Asia. Libanius here requests assistance in acquiring bears from Mt Ida near Troy for Celsus 3, who had been governor of Cilicia (362) before becoming governor of Syria in 363–64 and Syriarch in 364. Libanius wrote an identical request for bears to the Proconsul of Asia, Dulcitius 5, cf. *ep.* 1400/N108. Normally, the Syriarch was a city councillor, but the spectacle had 'lapsed for a long time' by 363 because of its exorbitant cost (cf. Liebeschuetz [1972], 141). As governor, Celsus 'could easily have fended off the job', as Libanius concedes, but he has embraced the opportunity out of love of honour (*philotimia*). It appears that Celsus has responded to Julian's call for a revival of traditional civic life and has volunteered to spend lavishly. Had Julian lived, Celsus would probably have held very high office.

1. Now there's an opportunity for you to repay our city that 'loving care in abundance'⁵⁵ through which she conferred on you all manner of learning and made your soul remarkable through various kinds of instruction. Indeed, your present political offices are the fruits of those studies, after which you'll very soon mount to the highest political office!⁵⁶ 2. It would be suitable for you to repay us, like nurses, in every way, but it's possible for you to be just towards the city while doing no work at all. For you know how sweet the horse races are for the people, and the delight that comes from the theatre, and that there's nothing like the wild beast fights, whenever the animals seem inescapable, but the fighters are able to prevail over them

⁵⁵ An allusion to Andromache's care for the horses of Hector at *Iliad* 8.186.

⁵⁶ The Praetorian Prefecture of the East.

through skill. 3. In the case of other entertainments, people stroll along to them at daybreak, but for the beast fights, they suffer under the night sky and think the stone benches softer than their beds, and the spectators' eyes anticipate the beast fighters in action!⁵⁷ 4. This spectacle, which had indeed lapsed for a long time⁵⁸ because of the great sums of money required, has now returned through Celsus' love of honour, or if you will, through his surpassing wealth. But no! He has the means by good fortune, but he accepted by choice (he could easily have fended off the job), and he has deferred to his son, who was just recently weaned from breast milk, concerning the crown, the robe, and such things,⁵⁹ but he is sparing neither silver nor gold in his zeal to overshadow those who are currently praised, by the greatness of his own expenditure. 5. Hearing that Trojan Ida breeds a species of bears that are tough fighters – and the main point here is the fear inspired by the bears, and that they be cunning and not easy to trick – he sent Polycarp⁶⁰ to bring back these fearsome beasts, and though Polycarp can pay more than another fellow might, he needs an alliance in case someone should set about him and offer trouble. For a citizen would have more influence than a stranger, and might easily push the buyer aside and illegally claim the purchase. 6. But you, good sir, will make the foreigner more powerful, if right is on his side. And we shall feel gratitude toward you, as will the buyers of the wild beasts, and whoever gathers together for these combats. For there will be nearly seventeen cities,⁶¹ at whose pleasure and praise, it will be impossible to be ignorant of where these bears have come from and who sent them!

57 Cf. *Or.* 1.87 where Libanius claims that eager spectators crammed into city hall (*bouleuterion*) before sunrise in anticipation of a speech by Libanius.

58 Libanius' claim is puzzling, since his cousin was Syriarch from 356 to 360. Petit (1956a), 129, hypothesised that the emperor's appropriation of the animals (cf. B3–4) in the last few years had prevented the combats from being staged since about 356. I infer that the cousin had staged beast fights until 359. But if the games were to be presented in summer 364 and had not been given since 359, Libanius might speak loosely and claim in that they had not been given for a 'long time' (πολλὸν χρόνον).

59 The accoutrements of the Syriarch. Celsus will fund the spectacle, but his young son will play the ceremonial role of Syriarch as his introduction to civic life.

60 Celsus' agent, mentioned also in *ep.* 1400/N108.

61 The 17 cities that are members of the Provincial Assembly of Syria. For a list, see note on B3.

45. TO CAESARIUS

(Sent to Hyperechius, who presented it at court in Ancyra, winter 363/4)
F1443 W1070

After Julian's death on 26 June 363, the Roman army retreated via Nisibis and Edessa, the new emperor Jovian and his court reaching Antioch in October. His stay there was brief. In early November, the court travelled northwards towards Ancyra, where Jovian intended to enter his consulship on 1 January 364. Caesarius was replaced as *vicarius* in mid-summer 363 and summoned to court in Antioch, where he was appointed *comes rei privatae* (363–64), a posting that disappointed both him and certain people at court who thought him a poor choice. Libanius' letter of encouragement is unusual since it implies that some people did believe technical qualifications for an office mattered (*ep.* 1435).

In winter 363/4, Libanius seized the opportunity of the court's presence in Ancyra to recommend a favourite former pupil, Hyperechius, son of the wealthy decurion, Maximus of Ancyra. Libanius had already discussed Hyperechius with Caesarius at Antioch, as he explains to Hyperechius in *ep.* 1141.4/N117: 'I have been in conversation with the excellent Caesarius on the subject [Hyperechius' political advancement], and my letter to him is on the way. Take it and make your respects to him and try to show yourself a man of sense, when he tries you out. He is very good at summing up at a glance.' B45 is the letter of introduction alluded to here. Libanius requests that Caesarius give Hyperechius a place as an advocate at the *comes'* tribunal. For further discussion of Hyperechius, see B179–80.

1. Perceiving that you were pleased with my letters and that you believed as a result that many were few, I started to write on the present matter as well, in order to make you more pleased. But when I saw⁶² that letters arriving from friends from all directions were being put off due to the amount of work you had and that there was no time for reading them, I thought it best not to add to the burden and bring 'owls to the Athenians'.⁶³ 2. Now, however, it was not in my power *not* to write, else I must absolutely be betraying a friend. Since I've spoken a lot about him to you, I'm now writing only a little, so that the bystanders may not shout it down when you get the letter – which I have often done of an evening!⁶⁴ 3. This Hyperechius, due to his birth, natural disposition for oratory, tactful way of life, imitation of an old

62 When the court was at Antioch in October 363.

63 A proverbial expression, like 'coals to Newcastle'.

64 If the translation is correct (and the Greek seems clear), it offers an interesting glimpse of the social setting in which letters were read and evaluated. If they were too long, listeners shouted for the reader to stop, as Libanius admits he has done. Libanius pays close attention to the length of his letters (cf. B31, 86).

man's prudence in youth, seriousness and charm, has received more from me than is a pupil's due. Moreover, I've been helped along a great deal by his parents, and a great deal has been done by my house for them, and we have thoroughly observed towards one another the conduct of kinsmen. 4. I'm happy to outdo them in performing favours, and, as I never forgo an opportunity, I think that now I'll be performing the greatest benefaction for them, if you are willing. The man is fitted to engage in public affairs, for he has intelligence, a ready tongue, ancestral wealth, and he has practised from childhood at not getting rich in illegal ways. 5. I wouldn't wish a fellow of his sort to be setting horses and dogs on the wild beasts and delighting his mother only so far as to bring her a hare from the hunt, but rather, from more important matters, and that he honour me, his own homeland, and you for placing him in charge of public business. 6. Consider that by bestowing office a second time on those who previously served, you confer fame on the men who first granted the offices, on the grounds that they saw clearly to whom they must grant them, and you yourself, by leading colts to the chariot and the hippodrome, will permit your own actions to be praised. 7. Put Hyperechius on display in the contests,⁶⁵ and grant him the favour, in which I myself will take pleasure, and so will you when the work is being done. Don't be concerned that success in my first request will persuade me to pester you about further matters. I will continue to be grateful and will leave the rest to Fortune.

46. TO CAESARIUS

(Sent to court in ?Ancyra, winter 363/4) F1449 W1485

B46 was also written in winter 363/4 during the anti-pagan reaction following Julian's death when his supporters saw their influence quickly dissipate. Libanius is especially keen to see his friend Acacius offered another post. Acacius had been governor of Phrygia (prior to 361) and governor of Galatia (361–62), where he earned Libanius' sincere gratitude for favouring Maximus of Ancyra and his son Hyperechius. Caesarius 1, the *comes rei privatae*, has summoned Acacius to court, and §1 reveals that Antioch is abuzz with speculation about what office Caesarius might secure for Acacius. As things turned out, Acacius was appointed *comes domorum per Cappadociam*, about which he would later complain bitterly that he had been put in charge of imperial horse farms (cf. *ep.* 1174/B102).

⁶⁵ Hyperechius' previous attempts to secure office and to become a senator had all failed. *Ep.* 1141.3 had encouraged him to be content with 'whatever is offered, however small'. The 'contests' will be court cases at the CRP's bar. A governorship is out of the question.

1. You've summoned a man⁶⁶ who has been crowned with public praises by all men, a man who has governed two peoples, and who has gripped the land with amazement. Although he ought not to be a private citizen even for a short time, it's not yet clear if you'll appoint him as governor once again. I'm very anxious indeed about it, since everyone is looking to you, and speculating what in the world you'll do. 2. But, by Zeus, do more deeds that are noble than deeds of the opposite sort, so that I too may evade the eager backbiters. They're now making quite a few calculations and are having a laugh,⁶⁷ but if you appoint the noble Acacius where he ought to be, we'll have a point from which to rally ourselves and we'll turn the 'jibes of those wits'⁶⁸ on their heads. I don't say these things to gratify him, for he'll have to work for nothing, but rather to enhance your situation, as you'll seem to everyone, by your employment of good men, to have good sense. 4. Yet, I owe Acacius a favour for his great deeds,⁶⁹ and if he bids me heap 'Ossa on Olympus',⁷⁰ I ought to be seen to be enthusiastic on his behalf. On the other hand, perhaps I'll repay that favour in some other way – he has a son and may he continue to! – but believe that my letter is seeking the self-interest of the recipient. 5. Encouraging yourself and bearing in mind that Fortune is hostile⁷¹ – I blame her for all this in that she didn't devote herself to the best men – do something worthy of our hopes, and dispense with that feeble excuse, which Olympius⁷² thinks is good enough, but I call it mere flattery.

47. TO CAESARIUS

(Carried by Dios to court in Ancyra, early 364) F1113 W1284

The amusing scenario in B47 illustrates Libanius' extreme attentiveness to the etiquette of epistolary exchange. He never foregoes an opportunity to bestow the 'gift' of a letter or to remind his correspondents that they should reciprocate. The

66 Acacius 8.

67 The factions hostile to Julian are gloating at the speedy demise of everything he worked for.

68 Plato, *Republic* 452b.

69 His 'great deeds' were the favour he showed the family of Maximus as governor of Galatia in 361–62.

70 Proverbial for a prodigious, but futile, effort. The giants Otus and Ephialtes had attempted to storm heaven by piling the mountains Ossa on Olympus and Pelion on Ossa. Cf. *Odyssey* 11.305–20.

71 An allusion to the anti-pagan reaction.

72 Olympius 3. The 'feeble excuse', literally a defence (*apologia*), is apparently a pretext for not appointing admirers of Julian in the current political climate. But it is not clear why Libanius regards it as 'mere flattery'.

courier Dios must wait through the night for this letter that merely recounts the circumstance of its composition. There is no news *per se* in it at all.

1. I was sitting and conversing in the evening with Celsus,⁷³ the governor of Syria, when one of the slaves rushed in and said ‘Dios is downstairs and is requesting a letter!’ At Celsus’ bidding, Dios came up and when I learned who the man was, that he had come from you, and that he was racing *back* to you, I said emphatically that, being ignorant of these things, I had been wronged on both counts – I would have written had I known! 2. ‘Well,’ said Dios, ‘you haven’t lost your chance for a letter. I had intended to mount up before midnight, but for your sake I’ll wait until daybreak.’ 3. So it is that I’m writing after dinner, and I forgive you for not writing, or rather, I’m amazed that you were able to write to anyone, but the fact that you didn’t write to me I don’t think is remarkable. For all kinds of business swirls about you, produced by a large territory on the mainland and many islands,⁷⁴ so that I’ve seen you oppressed even by the letters you received.⁷⁵ That’s how very far you are from being able to write to friends! 4. Perhaps some other fellow, one of those who doesn’t look into what is really appropriate, might be critical. But I’m not unaware of the reasons and, if I’m regarded as a friend, I think that’s enough. So, let it be, but I shall write letters to those whose business is in writing!

48. TO CAESARIUS

(Sent to court in Ancyra, early 364) F1114 W1285

Libanius wrote only four letters to Caesarius while he was *vicarius*, but 14 after his appointment to the *res privata*. Caesarius proved less helpful, however, than Libanius had expected and the tone of the letters becomes increasingly frustrated, as *ep.* 1459.3/N119 concerning Celsus 3’s inability to get his imperial subvention for his Syriarchy: ‘Good heavens! it is surely intolerable to be unsuccessful in getting what we usually do when thought to be successful, and for it to be common gossip that our course is set fair because of your influence, and yet for us to be in the doldrums, as though fast at anchor!’ There are further complaints in *ep.* 1147, 1199, and now B48 about Caesarius’ failure to assist Hyperechius of Ancyra, cf. B44.

⁷³ Celsus 3, governor of Syria in 363–64. He had been Libanius’ student in Nicomedia (*Or.* 62.61), had known Julian at Athens and then corresponded with him prior to serving as governor of Cilicia in 362 (*Or.* 15.51; Ammianus 22.9.13).

⁷⁴ An allusion to the jurisdiction of the *comes rerum privatarum*.

⁷⁵ The court was at Antioch in October 363, cf. *ep.* 1443.1/B45.

1. Just as I released you from writing due to your amount of *work*, so I'm asking to see your goodwill towards me *in the works*! Now, the fact that my friends have yet to give me anything to hear of what you'd expect from men who had got some advantage – how do you suppose *that* troubles my spirit? Even if there were a long wait (for business may perhaps require a lot of time), verbal goodwill, at any rate, could be demonstrated on day one. 2. Well, now at least if not before, let something happen of a sort that will persuade the Galatians that you're not unacquainted with me. They would recognise this perfectly if they should see hard at work the man whom I'd most like to appear in some rank and office. 3. You know who I mean, if indeed you recall our conversations here and the letter I sent.⁷⁶ But if you'd listen once again, not without pleasure: Maximus has a boy named Hyperechius, who possesses intelligence and a tongue not at all inferior to his mind, and, with his father alive, he seemed to be ready for service. 4. Now, the father would gladly pass his time in the management of the estates, and it's a black mark against me for the lad's nature to go unnoticed. If I were deprived of influence, I would pray to get it, but now that I have yours, I think that it will be able to set him up in some tasks appropriate for such a fellow. 5. And consider that, although my own son's situation is troublesome for me,⁷⁷ I count the pursuit of his security less important than Hyperechius' reputation. For I ought to be seen to care more for my friends than for my own family!

49. TO JOVINUS

(Sent to court in Constantinople, late winter 364) F1148 W1169

Libanius had written twice to Jovinus 1 at court in 357. Seven years later, when Jovinus became a high-ranking financial official, probably *comes sacrarum largitionum* or *comes rei privatae* (364–65), Libanius wrote him nine letters requesting assistance. By spring of 364, Celsus 3, governor of Syria and Syriarch, had still not received his imperial subvention for the games he was obliged to stage in at the provincial assembly in summer 364. Libanius wrote B49 to the *comes* Jovinus requesting assistance with the subvention. Cf. B44 on Celsus and B9 for a similar expression of frustration about the ineffectiveness of his letters.

⁷⁶ B45 recommending Hyperechius.

⁷⁷ Libanius' son Cimon was illegitimate and therefore could not inherit. Libanius expended much energy in trying to secure Cimon an adequate social rank.

1. The Celsus⁷⁸ who is now searching for wild beasts is an innocent fellow, since he presumes that my letters are still worth something. But they're weaker than shadows, I would say, and a hindrance to those who take them. 2. Nonetheless, since he couldn't convince himself of this, I must assist him as a friend who has been deceived: he adhered to long-standing custom and requested nothing unusual, but he didn't receive anything great or small for that fateful day. 3. The emperor⁷⁹ is, in other respects, good and generous and deprives him of none of the customary subventions, but the enthusiasm of our 'friends' is making his actions futile. 4. But reject their way, abide by your own character, and everything will be fine. For many reasons you ought to help Celsus and to bring assistance to the whole city, perhaps here too for many reasons, but the greatest one is that she sang the marriage song for you and received in herself your blessed marriage!⁸⁰

50. TO DATIANUS

(Sent to court at Constantinople, March/April 364) F1173 W1129

Between 355 and 365, Libanius wrote 20 letters to the *comes* Datianus I, a shadowy but extremely influential Christian courtier at the court of Constantius II. The deferential, even obsequious, tone of the letters is striking (cf. *ep.* 409/N7, 441/N13). His support had been critical in securing permission for the return to Antioch, though in later years, Libanius would later say that he hadn't acted out of affection, but simply to demonstrate that he could prevail in whatever he undertook (*Or.* 1.94). Further invective at *ep.* 81/N47; *Orr.* 42.24–25; 62.10.

Datianus lost influence under Julian, leading Libanius to fall silent, but regained it under subsequent emperors. However, at the news of Jovian's death (17 Feb. 364), a mob looted his properties in Antioch. Who was behind the riot is unclear, but the whole council was accused of having done nothing to stop the plundering. In March or April, the city sent an embassy to congratulate Valentinian on his accession and to plead for mercy from Datianus. Libanius sent via the ambassadors a long and formal plea to Datianus (*ep.* 1184/N126), as well as requests for help to the Prefect Secundus Salutius 3 (1185/N127), to Themistius (1186/N128) and to Alcimus (1187/N129). Antioch meanwhile lived in dread of Datianus' anger. B50, written just prior to dispatch of the embassy, reveals that people came on the run when news spread that Libanius had received a letter from Datianus. The letter expressed admiration for Libanius, but apparently had not dealt with the outrage to his properties. Libanius,

78 Celsus 3, Syriarch in 364 (cf. B44). He has made the normal request for imperial assistance with financing the beast fights, but enemies have set up an administrative roadblock.

79 Either Jovian (died 17 Feb.) or Valentinian (from 26 Feb.).

80 Jovinus had apparently been married at Antioch in 363/4.

however, became the city's principal intermediary and was able to use the affair to reassert his position in the city.

1. Your letter escaped few people – the majority both knew of it and read it often, some coming on the run when they heard, others I myself summoned, wishing that no one be ignorant of where I have been ranked by you. I'm accustomed to do this, thinking that I'm making fair gain on my finest possessions if I have many people conscious of them. 2. Now, in view of the important matters for which the letter arrived, each man praised you, while calling me fortunate: you, because you count those devoted to learning of such importance; me, because I enjoy so important an ally, who is able to resolve misfortunes and to grant the benefits of a better fortune. 3. So that the inhabitants of the city may not stop doing this – though you blame her with justification,⁸¹ you'll help again, even if it should cause you pain, for that's your manner – send me many letters as a consolation for the afflictions of my migraine.

51. TO DATIANUS

(Sent to Constantinople, autumn 364) F1259 W1046

B51 was written in autumn after Datianus' letter of pardon had reached Antioch. It is noteworthy that the letter was directed to Libanius and that Libanius was able to use the letter so effectively to shore up his public standing. Cf. *ep.* 1277.2 (the next letter in the series to Datianus): '...nor could I say that I don't have influence with you, since, in fact, I do and it doesn't go unnoticed'.

1. I received your very precious letter and read it not by myself, or rather by myself the first time, but then in my admiration I also convened the council as an audience for the letter. 2. Many who weren't council members poured in when they learned the purpose for which we were convening; when the letter's contents were made public, some leapt, some went pale, others blushed, others hung their heads. 3. All this was admiration for you, in that you dismissed the charges against those who had brought charges against themselves. After this, the innocent turned on the ostensible wrongdoers in anger and abused them and all but tore them apart, but the latter were ready to suffer, since it seemed they were justly accused. 4. I said that the most monstrous thing of all was to incite a war after your pardon and that to

81 Blame for having plundered his properties.

obliterate with tears the pleasures from peace was the conduct of men who didn't know what they were doing. 5. That's how we were freed and everyone called you a noble and great-hearted man and me a seer, even though I hadn't been trusted when I gave my prophecy. I foretold that I would persuade you, and I was able to foretell this, not gazing at some eagle borne on high, but becoming a Calchas⁸² from your character. At the time, I seemed to some a kind of boaster, but a veritable Melampus⁸³ when the end bore witness! 6. I seemed not only a prophet, but absolutely blessed, after being crowned by such praises from your mouth. And rightly so did I seem blessed, since that was greater than the 'tenth from Priene',⁸⁴ and your letter has become for me an heirloom and has found a place among my books. 7. To be so well spoken of by a man who has righted so many dynasties, helped so many people, harmed no one, achieved such intellectual distinction, and filled earth and sea with his fame, is, at least for a man of sense, greater than all the money that is and will be. 8. We entreat you to drive your team here and to write your letter from here, as you now write us from there. For we desire, even though you conquered your anger, to touch your hand, to shed a tear, and to use every form of apology. But if the straits are sweet and the Orontes contemptible in comparison with the Bosphorus, at least respect the Springs and Nymphs that everywhere dance for you, in the suburbs and in town.⁸⁵

82 Most famous of the seers of the Trojan War generation.

83 Mythological doctor and prophet who understood the language of birds and animals.

84 A 'tenth' or tithe from either Priene or Syracuse was proverbial for great wealth.

85 An allusion to the baths built by Datanus both within and outside the walls of Antioch; cf. *Or.* 11.194 on courtiers' building projects at Antioch; also, Liebeschuetz (1972), 132–36.

III. LETTERS TO PREFECTS, PROCONSULS AND VICARII

52. TO ARAXIUS

(Carried by Malchus to Constantinople, spring 356) F482 W1274

B52–53 are directed to Araxius, the Proconsul of Constantinople in 356. He had been *vicarius Asiae* c. 353/4 and knew Julian, who calls him a companion (*hetairos*) in the *Letter to Themistius* 259cd, but he does not appear to have held office under Julian. He became Praetorian Prefect during the revolt of Procopius, for which he was exiled, but afterwards reprieved (Ammianus 26.7.6, 10.7). B52 is a good example of how Libanius handles a recommendation for a youth from an undistinguished family who is too shy to put himself forward successfully. This Malchus carried five recommendations to Constantinople, but was apparently unsuccessful in securing appointment. In 361, he was serving as the tutor to the son of Domitius Modestus 2, the *comes Orientis*.

1. My previous letter was brought to you by the sons of Bassus.¹ They have a distinguished father, but Malchus here has no such thing, though he does have a great abundance of genuine virtues: self-control, courtesy, a desire for studying, and diligence at his studies. He wouldn't think it right to improve his position by pestering, and on improving it, he would forget his own name before he forgot the favour! 2. He's such an excellent fellow that, when he asked to receive letters to my acquaintances there and I said that I'd give one for you too, he hung his head and blushed, making it clear by his silence that although he was eager to receive one, he thought that receiving it was beyond him. For that very reason, he deserved even more to receive it – at least in my view – since he wasn't unaware of the benefit. 3. That's the sort of character our Malchus has, but that he is also lucky is shown by present circumstances: he'll gaze upon the fair City, fairer still for the rule of your good self, which ushers in everything excellent while driving forth everything inferior.

¹ Bassus 5, a senior *notarius*, whose two sons studied with Libanius.

53. TO ARAXIUS

(Carried by Gymnasius to Constantinople, summer 356) F503 W417

B53 introduces Gymnasius 2, a *rhetor* with whom Libanius had close relations in Constantinople prior to his return to Antioch. He is the recipient of two letters (*epp.* 401 and 572) and is mentioned in five others, including three to Aristaenetus (*epp.* 504, 537, 561/B173). Seeck, *BLZG* 166 identified him with a sophist from Sidon and inferred from *ep.* 504 that he was governor of Syria in 355–56. Petit, *FOL* 118 agreed that he was a teacher of rhetoric, though not the sophist from Sidon, but considered it ‘doubtful’ that he was governor. *PLRE* 405 concluded that he was an advocate, not a teacher of rhetoric, and that, as Seeck had inferred, he was the governor of Syria in 355–56. These divergent conclusions are due to the vagueness and awkwardness with which Libanius alludes to Gymnasius’ activities. What is significant for our purposes is that Gymnasius was lured to Antioch in 355 by the report that the Praetorian Prefect, Strategius Musonianus, had praised him in public, leading Libanius to give Gymnasius hope of political preferment if he came to Antioch (*ep.* 401). However, these hopes for a position did not materialise (*epp.* 504.2, 537.1) and, in summer 356, we find him returning to Constantinople carrying the current letter to the Proconsul of Constantinople (*ep.* 503/B53) and *ep.* 504 to Aristaenetus. Libanius would protest later in the year (*ep.* 537) that the Prefect Strategius was frustrated with both Aristaenetus and Gymnasius for not accepting the posts they had been offered. It is likely that Gymnasius, like Aristaenetus, had expected to be made a governor and was disappointed when he was offered no more than a post as an assessor. Both declined to serve and both were regarded by the Prefect as uncooperative.

1. Luppio² said that he was carrying a letter for me from you – he hasn’t yet delivered it, but he will. Right now I’m pleased that I’m going to get it, then I’ll be pleased at actually getting it. 2. Although I’ve marvelled at what Fortune has devised for you, I can marvel at your character no less than her. She is forever promoting your interests, while you safeguard those of your friends, and after your rise to prominence you still loved those whom you loved when you weren’t yet so prominent. Most men, on becoming great, cast aside their old acquaintances like worn-out cloaks. 3. After praising you with words (as did I) Gymnasius is revealing his admiration for you with deeds, for though he could, if he wished, cultivate his skill among us, where orators’ tongues are ‘like snowflakes on a winter’s day’,³ he would prefer to reap small rewards under you rather than surpass Cinyras⁴ elsewhere. 4. What

2 Otherwise unknown.

3 An allusion to the mesmerising effect produced by Odysseus’ rhetorical style (*Iliad* 3.222).

4 Mythical king of Cyprus and proverbial billionaire.

draws him back to you, on the one hand, is longing for the City, a fair City, by the gods, and great and free of troubles and tears (which are abundant elsewhere!), but he has been called yet more by your administration, since during others' administrations somebody might have disowned that very city by now and escaped clean away, just as from Athens, I suppose, under the Thirty.⁵ It's a great sign of a lawful administration that many men flock to it, whereas attempts to flee are a sign of the opposite. 5. Well, the greatest praise in your case is Gymnasius running from Syria to Araxius! Although I want to do the same thing, I can't do likewise – you know the constraints on those bound by teaching.⁶

54. TO ANDRONICUS

(Carried by Gymnasius to Constantinople, late 356) F506 W420

In B54, Libanius warns Andronicus 3, a former pupil and frequent correspondent, to beware the anger of a powerful and dangerous uncle, to be identified as either Nebrius 1, *comes Orientis* (354–58), or Strategius Musonianus, *PPO Orientis* (354–58). Seeck, *BLZG* 73, and *PLRE* 65 prefer Nebrius, with whom Libanius had poor relations, but Bouchery (1936), 63–68 (followed by Norman [1992], v. 1, 402–03, and Petit, *FOL* 239) argues that the uncle is the Prefect Strategius, who was angry with Andronicus on two counts: 1) his refusal to sever relations with a Cleomenes towards whom Strategius was very hostile, and 2) his refusal to cede a contested piece of property that Strategius had wanted to include as part of his daughter's dowry. Attempts by Libanius and Themistius to mediate only angered the Prefect further (cf. *ep.* 515/N21). Open hostility towards the powerful is rare in Libanius' letters and seems all the more imprudent in view of Libanius' recent exasperation with Andronicus for failing to keep the contents of a letter private (*ep.* 477/N17). In the *Autobiography*, Libanius depicts his relationship with Strategius as harmonious and untroubled (*Or.* 1.106–13). The letters, however, reveal that he experienced many ups and downs in his personal relations with this difficult Prefect (cf. *epp.* 476/N16 and 529/ B28). On Strategius' career and bilingualism, see Drijvers (1996); counter arguments in Woods (2001).

1. You need a plan against the plotting of your uncle – let him be called 'uncle', even in letters, so that it'll be clear just who it is who is doing what. One must fear the character of his power, for he does not use it justly. 2. What's left for you and me is to run. So if it's your intention to see Rome,

⁵ The tyrannical and short-lived regime installed after the defeat of Athens in 404 BC.

⁶ *PLRE* 405 deduces from the closing that Gymnasius was not a teacher, as Petit, *FOL* 118, suggests.

then to Rome, but if it would be more pleasant to see Greece, then to Greece, and don't be ashamed at running away, for the shame attaches to the one who intimidated you. 3. I shall endure the buffeting and if the opportunity ever arises, I shall take revenge for both of us – you aren't unacquainted with the way I usually take revenge.⁷ And yet, he's being punished even now, if you evaluate the situation correctly. For apart from the ill will felt by good men against him is the fact that he makes a fuss over that fellow who is forever uttering verbal absurdities!⁸ 4. Demosthenes would say, 'He does by preference the very things that one might invoke upon him as a curse', for he is an enemy to his brother's child and to the young man's teacher, but a 'friend to Pausanias the sodomite', and though he thinks bigger than Alcibiades, he imitates Simon⁹ – ask Aristophanes what *he* did!¹⁰ 5. In reply, write to me what plan you will take up and, in particular, if any glimmer of hope should appear that no evil will befall you if you stay, then stay, for that would be better than leaving.

55. TO ANATOLIUS

(Sent to court in Milan, winter 355/6) F438 W1242

B55–64. I include here 10 of the 25 letters to Anatolius 3, Praetorian Prefect of Illyricum (357–60). Anatolius was a model Late Roman official: upright, efficient, expert in Roman law, and passionate about Greek culture. He declined the post of Prefect of Rome in 355 and remained at court until he was appointed Praetorian Prefect of Illyricum in 357. He was a keen admirer of sophistic culture and proved Libanius' most reliable supporter at the imperial court, which was headquartered at Sirmium in Illyricum between 357 and 359. He also enjoyed displaying his own abilities as a sophist and often turned his correspondence with Libanius into a sophistic *agon* or contest. This explains why Libanius' letters are sometimes formal and respectful, as we would expect, and sometimes playful, jesting and packed with more complicated tropes than we normally find in his letters. Anatolius demanded as much. However, Anatolius had trouble controlling his tone and he seriously offended Libanius, who replied with letters of an unusually hostile tone, especially *epp.* 19/N40, 80/N46 and

7 Libanius will take revenge by composing an invective to be delivered privately to a group of four or five trusted friends.

8 Probably Libanius' sophistic rival Acacius 6.

9 The mss read 'Sikon', who is unattested. David Moncur proposes 'Simon', pilloried in *Clouds* for pilfering public funds (351) and perjury (399). This emendation was suggested as well by Kassel (1978), 56–59.

10 The passage is modelled on Demosthenes, *Letter* 4.11. On Pausanias' homosexual relationship with Agathon, cf. Plato, *Symposium* 177d, 193bc.

81/N47. For a detailed account of the friendship, see Bradbury (2000).

B55 concerns Libanius' efforts to secure imperial approval for his transfer to Antioch in 354. Although assigned to the imperial chair of rhetoric in Constantinople, Libanius returned to Antioch in 354 with the aim of remaining there. His pretext for failing to return to the city was ill health, which was at first merely feigned, but eventually became real. He was not officially released from his chair in the capital until winter 356/7, a year after the current letter was written.

1. I always marvelled at your goodwill towards me and couldn't persuade myself that you were doing this unless one of the gods was prodding you, so greatly did you seem to surpass everyone else who claims to be my friend. But now you showed a concern that is 'beyond the mark',¹¹ as they say, both in what you wrote to me, that I 'must learn something from Magnus' and in telling him what he must say to me.¹² 2. Now, he might have seemed an obscure messenger to somebody else, since all he reported was that I 'ought not to be agitated to no purpose', but some inspiration from Dodona¹³ seized me and it wasn't at all obscure. 3. I thought that I ought to feel gratitude to you for many things, if indeed the beloved ought to feel gratitude towards their lovers, for your remembering me in your soul, for joining me in wishing that I should not be deprived of my kinsmen, for investigating this to see if it were possible, and for deciding to make known that it is possible. 4. Now I acknowledge the favour, though keeping it to myself, but when permission has been granted me to speak forth, I shall fill earth and sea with it! 5. How then shall I show concern for you in return? If I were looking to your interest rather than the common good, I might pray that you sit at home enjoying your possessions and your beautiful Berytus.¹⁴ However, I'd wish the cities to prosper rather than for you to sleep at home free from cares, so I won't ask for this, but rather for your everlasting triumph and for another office to come into your hands. 6. I'm requesting of you what you'll certainly do, especially as it's already been done by you! It would be fitting that the emperor's order, conveyed by letter, for my removal from here, be laid to rest, as it were, now that you've arrived there. There's no one among those with the power to effect such things who won't think it a godsend that something

11 Literally 'over the trenches', an allusion to the fifty-foot earthen trench in which athletes performed the long jump.

12 Anatolius has observed the routine custom of having important, private information reported personally by a trusted letter-carrier. Political prudence and the demands of the epistolary genre both encouraged this practice.

13 A famous oracle site of Zeus in north-western Greece.

14 Anatolius is a native of Berytus.

serving your designs has come up. As things stand, letter after letter has arrived and very nearly expelled me, except that my body did me the favour of being ill. 7. Yet see what a great disaster I judge that journey: even my sickness isn't hateful now! So arguing this very point, that my body has weakened under repeated attacks on my kidneys (what haven't they endured?), persuade them not to send me out into the icy extremes of winter, which is the worst thing for weak kidneys. In fact, the doctors say that with everything I've suffered here, I've taken Thracian blows.¹⁵ So, whoever sends me to consort with the young, let him know that he is sending me to my death.

56. TO ANATOLIUS

(Carried by Spectatus to Milan, summer 356) F512 W426

The notary Spectatus 1, Libanius' cousin and closest contact at court (cf. introduction to B5), is returning to court in Milan in summer 356 after participating in negotiations with Persian ambassadors at Antioch, where he has reported the court gossip about Anatolius 3, who had declined to be Prefect of the City of Rome (PUR) in 355 but is being considered for the Praetorian Prefecture over the East. Anatolius apparently is not eager to take up that post either.

1. The noble Spectatus bound me to himself and persuaded me to devote myself to him and to make him my all to such an extent that, whoever wanted to see me after sundown, ran to him and had me there and then! For even my books, sweetest of all things to me, often took second place to him and I'd be drawn away from those pleasant pursuits towards him. 2. The reason isn't so much our kinship – I've many kinsmen none of whom has such an effect on me – as his character, which overflows with charms that are powerfully alluring. But what excited me most is what follows. 3. He admires the greatness of your intellect and whenever he remembers you – and he often does – only with difficulty can he stop himself from making some comment concerning you. As I gaze at those present, I feel pride and rejoice in the listeners' boisterous pleasure at your affairs being in such a good state! 4. Now, under your spell, he's even becoming a prophet¹⁶ and he is foretelling things for which we owe him a reward, though he'll have to give you an account of himself. For while it's in our prayers that you rule

¹⁵ An allusion to the cold wind from the NNW, called *Thraicias* or *Thrascias*.

¹⁶ His prophecy consists of predicting, based on court gossip, what office Anatolius will receive.

over us,¹⁷ since we know what you'll accomplish, it brings you no pleasure, for you know nothing of profiting illegally from office. 5. But even if the job is onerous to you, don't be irritated at mere talk of it. For the job won't be determined by the talk, but the voice of the seer is anticipating the job.

57. TO ANATOLIUS

(Carried by Apolinarius to Milan, summer 356) F535 W449

This letter of introduction was carried to court by Apolinarius 1, brother of the Quirinus for whom Libanius later wrote *epp.* 358, 359/N28, 365/B5 and 366/B35 in an effort to have the requirement waived that his son, Honoratus 3, report to court. Apolinarius is being summoned to court in Milan, but the motive is unclear.

1. My attention is now focused on business of the greatest importance and you, if you're willing, will have granted favours of the greatest importance. By the same action, you'll both assist me and glorify yourself, for helping victims of injustice saves them from evils while it confers on their rescuer a greater reputation. 2. Consider the seriousness of the summons for your assistance. Apolinarius is being dragged off to Italy by men who've devoured many cities, in order that they can swallow him up, too. Let that be the first impetus for you. The man is distinguished and he's from a proud family known for learning. Let those three things encourage you in his favour. 3. Our friendship began long ago and he's always added to this friendship, and this, in your judgement, is even more important than those other qualities. Now hear the most important reason. He's a brother of Quirinus, who, in his political posts, imitated *you*, keeping his palms to himself and never extending them. 4. This Quirinus harbours two constant concerns in his soul, me and his son, since he's preoccupied about the boy, that he acquire eloquence, and about myself, that I shall have a reputation for pre-eminence in eloquence. Seeing his brother harassed, he recognised only one hope, your courage, and he urged me to send a letter, though he himself hesitated to send one, erring in this way alone, in that he is a faint-hearted orator. 5. Respect this shortcoming in him, ponder the other circumstances and show for his brother the enthusiasm he shows for me.

17 As Prefect of the East, replacing Strategius Musonianus.

58. TO ANATOLIUS

(Carried by Sarapodorus¹⁸ to Milan or Sirmium, winter 356/7) F549 W463

Anatolius 3 had declined the offer of the Prefecture of Rome in 355 (*ep.* 391.14/N4), allegedly because he feared civic disturbances between aristocracy and plebs. In summer 356, his name was being canvassed as a possible successor to Strategius Musonianus in the Eastern Prefecture (B56). In winter 356/7, however, news reached Antioch that Anatolius had been appointed Praetorian Prefect of Illyricum, the post he held until his death in 360. B58 is Libanius' letter of congratulations on his political promotion.

1. 'What was expected has come to pass!'¹⁹ To put it another way, it's true to say that there's no one who didn't expect the present office. Thus, what you're now taking in hand isn't alien to you, rather you received precisely what is yours, and everyone raised a great shout, counting blessed those whom you'll govern, while praising the man who appointed you, and rejoicing with you for seizing the opportunity to display your virtue. 2. Here's how gratified many people are: although you're just embarking on office, they use expressions not as if you were about to do many good things for the cities, but as if you'd already done them all, and they discuss your future actions as if they were already completed! Such is the report going abroad in the realm. 3. Although I was one of those who was pleased, I wasn't one of those who received a letter, rather I was one of those saying, 'A letter has arrived for so-and-so', and 'He honoured so-and-so with a letter'. Perhaps it was to be expected that this happen, since it's fitting that one's self-regard be on a level with one's rank. 4. Although it was possible in the past to show you some honour when you were of 'humble estate', now I'm afraid that even your receiving a letter from me may result in an accusation against me! Just see how genuine my fear is: although I could praise the thoroughly excellent Sarapodorus from every angle, I'll keep quiet, lest this work to the detriment of the foremost of the Egyptians!

59. TO ANATOLIUS

(Carried by Pelagius to Sirmium, spring 357) F563 W478

Pelagius 1, an old schoolmate of Libanius and a *principalis* of Cyrrhus, carried this letter of introduction while on the journey to Rome for the Vicennialia of Constantius

18 An Egyptian otherwise unknown.

19 A play on a common closing in Euripides' tragedies, 'What was expected did not come to pass', e.g. *Bacchae* 1390; *Medea* 1417.

II. Libanius credits Anatolius for two recent favours for close friends: Clematius 2 has been appointed governor of Palestine (357–58) and Libanius' dear friend Aristaenetus 1 has been invited to be an assessor with Anatolius in Illyricum, an offer that he would decline (*epp.* 537, 582/B174).

1. Even though I didn't get what I desired *when* I wanted it, nonetheless I did get what I desired. For I should really have received your letter long ago, but I have it at last, and you've stopped my pain, though you had it in your power that I not feel pain from the start. 2. Yet you've discovered a kind of solace for this too, for though you didn't give quickly, you gave, by your very slowness, the charm of the letter-carrier. For it was Spectatus, who in my view has no equal (apart from you) and perhaps in your view he has none at all! 3. You can be sure that you've made me governor of Palestine by dispatching Clematius there, and that the favours with which Aristaenetus was showered have also been done to me! Add further to the honours conferred on him, although I'm afraid that he may appear better at oratory than administration. 4. As for the force of the laws, which you've restored to them, and the deterrents by which you prevent wrongdoing, some believe that your over-scrupulousness will quickly undo your administration, but, in my view, this is what's most likely to extend your office, since help lies in plain sight. If it should turn out otherwise, don't you, for your part, shy away from what is noble: don't become corrupt in order to govern those whom you rule for a longer term. 5. But you need no counsellors on this matter, and you doubtless know Pelagius here, for you're hardly unacquainted with the good men among the Syrians. And knowing him to be a good man, you'll look upon him favourably and you'll send him on with good wishes, a man honoured by his fellow citizens, both the needy and the wealthy, due to his courtesy. Thus, he's escaped the arrows of Envy, despite enjoying greater prosperity than others. 6. A school companion of mine from of old, he's always been a friend. Let him learn how much that means to you.

60. TO ANATOLIUS

(Sent to Sirmium, spring 357) F578 W494a

This tortuously difficult letter marks the beginning of a rift between Libanius and Anatolius. To understand the letter's allusions, it will be helpful to look at the series of letters preceding it:

Ep. 549/B58 (winter 356/7) Libanius' first letter of congratulations on the appointment as Praetorian Prefect of Illyricum.

Ep. 552/N22 (Feb./March 357) Long letter of congratulations on Anatolius' appointment as Prefect. The letter opens (§§1–4) with jesting abuse appropriate to a letter to a close friend. §§5–9 contain praise of Anatolius' conduct before the emperor at the ceremony at which he received his office. §§10–14 contain praise of Letoius 1, the letter-carrier and Antiochene envoy to Constantius' Vicennalia celebration in Rome in spring 357.

Ep. 563/B59 (spring 357) Spectatus has delivered a letter of Anatolius. In reply, Libanius praises the political favours done for close friends Clematius 2 and Aristaaenetus 1. Introduction of Pelagius 1, the envoy from Cyrrhus to the Vicennalia celebration in Rome.

Ep. 574/B19 (spring 357) Letter of introduction for Iamblichus 2, en route to Rome. The letter was never delivered. Iamblichus stopped at Athens and proceeded no further westwards.

The current letter (*ep.* 578/B60) replies to a letter of Anatolius in which the Prefect, who enjoyed sparring with professional sophists, had responded to Libanius' jests in *ep.* 552.1–4/N22 with his own explanation for his long silence. He then proceeded to attack the praise Libanius had accorded him in §§5–9, claiming that Libanius was a flatterer who praised good and bad alike and, consequently, he would prefer criticism from Libanius, not praise. He bolstered his argument by naming two men whose qualities were far inferior to Libanius' praise. Stung by these remarks, Libanius nonetheless controlled his tone and served up in the current letter the sort of complicated sophistic riposte Anatolius loved. Anatolius would make a similar, but more serious, gaffe in the following year, which caused Libanius to respond with unusual hostility in *epp.* 19/N40, 80/N46 and 81/N47, cf. Bradbury (2000), 175–81.

1. The letter was so clearly yours – even if the sender's name hadn't been appended, I would have discovered the author from the contents. You're a scoundrel and your letter contained a lot of this, from which I'm amazed that even under the pressure of work, you don't give up your usual habits. 2. That there was nothing sound in your letter, I shall demonstrate. First, you said that you wrote to everybody except me because I'd got angry and given you a verbal thrashing.²⁰ There was no immediate necessity for a man who didn't get a letter to do *that*, rather it would make sense and would be not unreasonable for one pained at not getting a letter to remain silent. Now, don't focus on whether or not I wrote mildly after enduring being disregarded by you, but do focus on this, that feeling pain is the lot of one who is neglected and silence would have been a perfectly reasonable consequence of pain.²¹

20 Anatolius had not written for nearly two years.

21 The Greek is difficult here, but the logic seems to be, People who don't get letters feel pain, which produces silence. I didn't get letters and felt pain, yet nonetheless spoke out in a letter. Libanius uses a similar argument in *ep.* 391/N4.

3. There, with this argument you have been refuted – and rather brilliantly – but in labelling me a flatterer, you reveal yourself to be a lover of flatterers. For if it's a bad thing to be a flatterer, and if I do this, and if you rank me ahead of most others, then you're conceding that you're an admirer of someone who is bad. Moreover, if it's true that whoever takes pleasure in people in whom it is not right to take pleasure is himself a bad man, then our high-and-mighty prefect is convicted of being a bad man! 4. I'm amazed if, while you *didn't* play the flatterer in order to get your prefecture, I disgraced myself in this way – I who needed neither to hold office nor get rich from you people, and I accepted poverty in order *not* to become a flatterer! If I had really known how to fawn, I could have made a lot of money! However, I keep my distance from both riches and fawning, and though I'm not upset at *not* being rich, I *am* proud at not being a slave. 5. So I say that I avoid the conduct which I really do avoid in actual fact. I am *not* a flatterer and, after the like of Lasthenes,²² I get annoyed when I hear myself called what I'm not. You, on the other hand, desire praise and you are right to do so, since praise is a principal compulsion to the practice of virtue, but when you make a show of despising it, you don't do right, since you're being a deceiver. 6. But you're not right either in trying to deceive someone you can't overpower. For 'if I don't know Phaedrus', then I don't know my own mother!²³ Next, you encourage me to dispense with praise and to criticise you. 7. Now, if you're persuading me to criticise one who does no wrong, then you're doing nothing other than being a slanderer. But if you're a genuine wrongdoer, then persuade *yourself* not to do wrong rather than persuade me to criticise. For it's far better to be completely free of suspicion than to exploit it and to search for someone who will bring an accusation. 8. By your account, I 'bestow praise equally on bad and good alike, and for that reason you shun praise from me'.²⁴ True, that fellow²⁵ was praised very highly, but many men don't possess perfect virtue, only a small portion, and it's unjust not to honour

22 Proverbial as a traitor for handing Olynthus over to Philip (Demosthenes 18.48; 19.265, 342). When Lasthenes' men were shocked at being called traitors, Philip apologised for his uncouth Macedonians, noting that they 'called a spade a spade' (Plutarch, *Sayings of Kings and Commanders*, Philip 15, 178c).

23 Plato, *Phaedrus* 228a: 'O Phaedrus! If I don't know Phaedrus, I've forgotten myself.'

24 Libanius here quotes from Anatolius' letter.

25 Anatolius had offered two examples of unjustified praise. He was replying to *ep.* 552/N22, a letter of introduction for Letoius i, one of Libanius' dearest family friends. Among the extant letters to Anatolius, the other person who receives glowing praise from Libanius is his cousin Spectatus 1. If these two men were Anatolius' targets, it is no wonder Libanius was offended.

this portion with praise. If, on the other hand, one of the less virtuous has been praised, then he would have been exhorted towards virtue through the art of eloquence, for in being admired for his non-existent virtues as if they were real, he would have desired actually to be such a man. 9. But you're a hard-hearted fellow in that you run down both the slumberers and the vigilant! However, if Dardanus²⁶ was wrong in falling asleep, then the one who didn't fall asleep is free from blame. And if you *criticise* this man's sleeplessness, why don't you *praise* the other's somnolence? But the one did no wrong in falling asleep by day from his nocturnal worries and the other, in conquering sleep, deserves a crown, not criticism. 10. But you see that wealth (let's posit that I'm wealthy) didn't make me worse, rather you were exalted by power to play the false accuser! I certainly advise you to avoid that and to attend carefully to holding on to political office. 11. In any event, some people are accusing you, creating a brouhaha over the 'Sale of the Phoenician',²⁷ and all those litigants who depart and flee from court under a rain of insults are accusing you. I shall demonstrate that they don't know what they're talking about, but if you don't stop doing such things, I shall appear as your accuser!

61. TO ANATOLIUS

(Carried by Modestus to Sirmium, spring 357) F583 W498

Word has reached Antioch in spring 357 that Anatolius has invited Domitius Modestus 2 to be an assessor. In the following year, Modestus was appointed *comes Orientis*, in which office he served for six years (358–62). On Modestus, see B68–75.

1. What am I to do? You say that you desire criticism,²⁸ but you do things worthy of praise, and though you're hard on the bearer of praise, you give

26 An early king of Troy, not known, however, for falling asleep. The name is mythological code, perhaps for a man from the region of Troy, or, perhaps, for an 'older' man who nods off or who seems as 'ancient' as Dardanus. Neither Letoius or Spectatus, however, was old in 357 (see previous note).

27 Sievers (1868), 238 suggested that the 'Sale' was a literary satire on a Phoenician sophist, like Lucian's *Lives for Sale*. The second half of the sentence alludes to court cases and we might suspect that the 'Sale' involved a corrupt Phoenician official, but a later letter undermines that hypothesis. In a letter of reply (not extant), Anatolius defended himself against the jibes in §11, to which Libanius responded in turn in *ep.* 314.3: 'I was particularly pleased to see you struggling over the "Sale" and the flight of the rhetors, not because you struggled nobly but because you did such a miserable job of it. For you claim that your "Sale" resulted in no harm to him [the Phoenician] and that the speakers don't wish to profit from their labour – they who would walk through fire even for the sake of some profit!' For further discussion, see Bradbury (2000), 176.

28 Cf. B60.6.

him nothing to censure. 2. How much acclaim do you suppose that is worth? Domitius has been summoned to share your concerns, a man of no use to a bad prefect. If I should wish to speak about his virtues, there's much I could say, but I'm afraid it may give rise to a joke if I recount to you what you knew perfectly well when you summoned him. You certainly didn't summon him in ignorance. But *this* you don't know, so learn it. He came to the aid of others' speeches, but he admired mine, partly out of respect for friendship, partly from his knowledge of eloquence, so that he appeared to me a good man in both respects – for not altering our friendship and for honouring eloquence.

62. TO ANATOLIUS

(Sent to Sirmium, winter 358/9) F339 W342

Through the patronage of Anatolius, Sabinus 5, an advocate at the court of the Praetorian Prefect, has been appointed governor of Syria (358–59). Libanius requests that Theodorus 11, whose background is given in this letter, receive similar treatment. Libanius feels particular gratitude towards Theodorus, since he was one of the first to enrol his son to study with Libanius upon his return to Antioch in 354. Theodorus did not receive an office until 364–65, when he was a governor, probably of Bithynia.

1. What you've done is splendid – may there be even more such deeds! – and I trust that I'll persuade you, since I'm asking you to follow your own custom. 2. The reasons for which you're praised are many and various, in particular, because you didn't neglect people here, although residing among the Pannonians.²⁹ Rather, as if you were present and living among them, you look to how each of your acquaintances might advance to better things, and you take action just by looking. 3. But when the business about your efforts on behalf of Sabinus reached us, all one could hear bruited about was that 'such-and-such' came to 'this fellow' from 'that fellow' because of 'so-and-so'. 4. Now, Theodorus too ought to meet with equal treatment and to become a source of equal praises for you, and Sabinus ought to rejoice for Theodorus just as Theodorus rejoiced for him. 5. Someone said, 'You're not unacquainted with Theodorus'.³⁰ Nonetheless, I'll tell you about him, for it's no harm for you to hear what you already know, and it gives me pleasure to praise the

29 As Prefect of Illyricum.

30 Plato, *Theaetetus* 192d, 193a.

man. 6. He was born of good family in Arabia, and proved himself better than his forbears when he set out for your city to acquire legal knowledge,³¹ taking more pleasure in his work than others do in dancing. 7. He returned from there filled with knowledge of the law, but he didn't reject the strength which he'd previously acquired from my brand of learning. Rather, as a result of this legal knowledge, he received those who fled to him in two havens: his ability to cite the law and the power of rhetoric. 8. And although he didn't neglect his fees, he certainly didn't focus on the single issue of how he would earn fees. Rather, he argued so brilliantly in court, with all the powers in his possession, that he was rarely defeated, and he earned plaudits even from those who were defeated by him. 9. When your administration is praised, he isn't sceptical, and that's the mark of a man who knows your nature. Moreover, he rejoices just as we do who are most able to take pleasure in your virtues, and he counts your subjects fortunate and would wish to serve under you. 10. Towards me, moreover, Theodorus is as you might think he should be, for he's the fellow who transferred his son to my school, thereby showing the path to others, and by his deed, counselling them which route they ought to travel. In particular, when my affairs involved court proceedings, he expended much sweat and many speeches on my behalf – indeed he counted his own affairs less important than assisting mine. 11. Where's the virtue if a man so admired, so devoted to you, so dear a friend to me, a man ranked in the forefront because of his professional skill, isn't in the forefront in other respects? Or do you want me to search for someone else who'll do this? Although it's not impossible, Theodorus doesn't deserve that. In fact, he considers your participation more important than the business itself, and it's more tolerable to him to achieve no success than to achieve it through someone else. 12. So apply yourself and let Theodorus appear in that catalogue of men who've been honoured by you. For it's much better that this fellow, who has approached me and is at the same time a friend, recount how he's been honoured, than for you to search for a way to excuse yourself.

31 Berytus, Anatolius' native city, was a centre for the study of Roman law in the Greek East. Since Anatolius was expert in law himself, Libanius prudently stresses the legal knowledge of the man he is recommending.

63. TO ANATOLIUS

(Sent to Sirmium, winter 358) F348 W351

In B63, Libanius offers Anatolius a mix of praise and blame, praise for having invited Tuscianus 2, whose background is detailed in the letter, to be an assessor, blame for having then awarded him a low-level job, to which is attached a modest rank and salary but no real work. The natural step after serving as an assessor to a Praetorian Prefect would be a governorship, but Tuscianus has failed to capitalise on his opportunity and now finds himself in a low-paying, low-prestige civil service job. Libanius chides Anatolius for having helped so little, despite his vast powers of patronage.

1. Since you claim that it's very pleasant to be criticised, while my desire is to praise good men, I'll gratify both you and myself by praising some things and criticising others. 2. The impetus for both will be provided by your actions concerning Tuscianus. On taking over your office, you summoned the man and made him an assessor, and the report of your action raced through the cities and there was no place which didn't embrace the news that 'now just poverty brings rewards', that 'so-and-so has summoned so-and-so from Phrygia to Pannonia', that 'he'd long had the opportunity to enrich himself, but departed with praise rather than money'. 3. When I alone among the admirers didn't do this, and people asked why, I said, 'Whenever I find noble men doing some noble thing, like the son of Thetis³² or the city of the Athenians, I don't stand up and shout since I see what I expected to see', since, in fact, even before your summons, if anybody had asked me whom you would summon, I would've named the very fellow whom you've summoned! 4. For you surely intended to seek out a man who is shrewd, skilled in rhetoric, a man who knows how to work, be a friend, speak well, and yet who understands how to keep silent, and who had long been schooled in living with poverty. Such is my view of this Tuscianus, who has come to me at your behest. Now the complaints that you desire are coming in! 5. When he arrived and recounted the laws of your administration, I rejoiced at seeing a friend and I listened to him in my desire to learn why he'd come. Could you endure Truth being honoured? They say it's no big thing. Although Tuscianus put on a grave air about the nature of the business, the business didn't seem to me to be worthy of Tuscianus' nature. And though he argued against me, I refuted him. In mid-winter, an imperial letter arrived providing him an increased salary, and, if you will, enhanced stature: fine things, but still less than your influence and my desire. 7. In Tuscianus' view, there's

32 Achilles.

nothing about these matters that isn't great, and for this very reason the man ought to advance towards some great thing, since everything that comes from you is to his mind great! At the moment, he might even accept the jibe of being paid by the emperor in the midst of indolence and you're perfectly aware of what we call such men.³³ However, if he should receive what he deserves, his rank will approach his salary. 8. So let him go to work, good sir, and see to it that his job isn't worse than idleness. But if you haven't decided where you ought to post him, you're in the wrong, though you're a man who normally lives with justice. On the other hand, if you think you ought to do what I say, don't delay, thereby obeying Aeschylus and Hesiod³⁴ before him. 9. Moreover, I won't pass over this point either. When I saw the man in a single cloak, fighting against the cold, struggling against the rain and battling the mud, I asked whether his children too enjoyed their father's reputation, but no cloaks to cover them. 10. He blushed and recalled with a laugh a certain Lysander³⁵ who refused the cloak offered by Dionysius, but I said that he didn't realise that he was preparing a difficult old age for himself. 11. Well, I'll let him be, but I do counsel you to further Tuscianus' interests, for it would be appropriate on account of his love of poverty, and it's very easy for you Prefects to imitate the cloud of Zeus, from which he rained gold on the Rhodians.³⁶ 12. What's more, if you were willing, a state of comfort might arise, thus wiping clean the blemish. Let this be done now, before Tuscianus receives some office, since *then* he'll want to go hungry!

64. TO ANATOLIUS

(Sent to court at Sirmium, winter 358) F362 W365

The elderly doctor Marcellus of B64, mentioned also in *epp.* 359, 378 and 384, has enrolled his small sons in the corps of imperial couriers (*agentes in rebus*). Like the members of other bureaux (cf. B5 and 35 on Honoratus 3), the *agentes* have been ordered to present themselves in person at court for a vetting of the official rolls. Since the *agentes* are under the command of the *magister officiorum*, Musonius 1,

33 Foerster's note *ad loc.* suggests 'Drones' (ζηφῆνες), as at *Or.* 30.12. The source is Hesiod, *Works and Days* 303–06.

34 Aeschylus, *Suppliants* 208: 'Then do not delay, but put your purpose into action'; Hesiod, *Works and Days* 311–13: 'Work is no disgrace: idleness is a disgrace... whatever your lot is, work is best'.

35 The Spartan king Lysander refused the costly tunics offered by Dionysius, tyrant of Syracuse, for Lysander's daughters, cf. Plutarch, *Life of Lysander* 2.5.

36 Pindar, *Olympian* 7.49–50: 'Zeus brought to them [the Rhodians] a yellow cloud and rained abundant gold over them'.

with whom he has no influence (cf. B33–34), Libanius requests that Anatolius, whose ‘nod is as good as law with Musonius’, intervene with him to ensure that Marcellus’ sons are not deprived of their rank for failure to appear. Libanius adds that by custom the Prefect outranks and has influence over the *magister officiorum*. Hence, Musonius will honour Anatolius’ wishes.

1. You probably know Marcellus from his skill and also in the past from his character, for he’s as fine a man as he is good a doctor. 2. Now, you came to know his skill from his treatment of others (may you learn of all doctors’ skills that way!), but I saw him in the midst of my own sufferings, from which he dragged me back when I was in deep water. If he hadn’t calmed my migraine, either I would have died, or I would have lived yet grieved that I didn’t die.³⁷ 3. Each of our city’s inhabitants could recollect Marcellus in similar circumstances. For he’s come through it all, ranging himself against onslaughts on the body, so that if he should be well, there’s hope for the sick, but if he should be ill, then sick and well alike share a common fear. The man who honours him doesn’t astonish, since he pays little in exchange for much, but the man who doesn’t honour him would even punch his own father in the jaw! 4. I’m under every compulsion to repay the old man, and I would repay him if I could employ your influence – for my own is pretty insubstantial. So show your zeal and demonstrate that I’m no slouch at repaying favours. 5. What then am I asking? Rather late in life Marcellus became a father, a title he greatly desired and for which he prayed at shrines, and he has children, gifts from Asclepius. 6. That’s why, though a very old man, he’s raising very young sons whom the emperor enrolled among the imperial couriers when they were barely weaned. Previously, the noble Musonius was in charge of them, ensuring their security for all time. But now decrees are circulating to the effect that everyone in this career is to appear before you. 7. There’s no way this is easy for Marcellus’ sons – they couldn’t even pass through the city gates! I’m very concerned that this may deprive them of their rank, and I’m asking you to preserve them in rank, though absent. It’s said that a nod from you is law for Musonius, and the custom is an old one that the prefect be arbiter of the actions taken by those occupying his present position.³⁸ 8. Confirm that excellent opinion in the case of those I’m speaking of and don’t be surprised if Marcellus couples my letter with Strategius’³⁹ letter, for the rumour is that I’ve very great influence with you.

37 Cf. *Ep.* 393/N5 on Libanius’ chronic headaches and Marcellus’ interventions.

38 The Praetorian Prefect outranks the *magister officiorum*.

39 Strategius Musonianus, *PPO Orientis* 354–58.

65. TO HONORATUS

(Carried by Martiales to Bithynia, summer 358) F386 W389

B65–67 are addressed to Honoratus 2, Praetorian Prefect of the Gauls (355/57) and later Prefect of Constantinople (359–61). B65, composed while Honoratus was between political offices, illustrates vividly the careful etiquette surrounding the dispatch and receipt of letters for Libanius.

1. The worthy Martiales⁴⁰ and I met up with one another at evening when we were riding on horseback, and as he recognised me first, perhaps because of sharper eyesight, or perhaps inferring it from my philosopher's cloak, he gave a shout and dismounted, and I did the same thing. After mentioning where he was coming from and where he was headed, he said, 'Write to your friend', meaning you. 2. I thought he ought to amend that description and not claim that a state of affairs that had long ago ceased to exist, was still in effect. I'm aware and informed many that you all but surpassed even Aristaenetus⁴¹ in your affection for me. I can say as well that at some point you ceased to feel that affection, though I can't say why. 3. For when you acquired political office here (I mean the more important one)⁴² and I returned,⁴³ a return that was not altogether happy – I can't complain of other matters, but my body was killing me – well, when that difficult winter had set in and you were unable to do as much as you intended for me, I was deprived of many advantages and experienced many dangers. Let those things be put down to the crisis.⁴⁴ 4. After this, you were summoned from Cilicia to a more distinguished office⁴⁵ and in writing to Theophilus⁴⁶ that you were setting out, you tacked on a greeting for me and my name was an addition to a letter directed to another. 5. This was the first thing that

40 Otherwise unknown.

41 Aristaenetus 1, Libanius' intimate friend from Nicomedia who died in an earthquake on 28 August 358.

42 *Comes Orientis*, 353–54. Honoratus had also been governor of Syria prior to 353.

43 To Antioch in 354.

44 The winter of 353/4 was 'difficult' and full of 'dangers' due to Gallus Caesar's violent outbursts against other officials and the Council of Antioch. When the Council did not readily comply with the Caesar's order to impose price controls on grain, he was furious and ordered the execution of its chief members, which would have included Libanius' uncle Phasganus. Ammianus 14.7.2 reports that this order would have been carried out, if the *comes* Honoratus had not resolutely opposed the Caesar. Libanius himself had been accused of treason by magic, but the case went nowhere (*Or.* 1.98; *ep.* 405/N10).

45 The Prefecture of the Gauls, 355–57.

46 Probably Theophilus 1, the governor of Syria killed by a mob in 354.

disturbed me and made me suspect that, apparently, our old relationship had changed. You seemed, by not having written to me, to have altered, and by mentioning me in someone else's letter you seemed to wish gradually to dissolve your relationship with me without people being shocked at the transformation. I thought that I ought to endure this and to believe that there wasn't yet a complete rift between us. 6. Then, your prefecture over the Western Gauls and the summons to Quirinus⁴⁷ to share your labours, and a letter to him, but not for me. What in the world was a man to think who previously had been esteemed above all others, and later was held of no account? 7. Despite being dishonoured, I counselled Quirinus to obey, but, I suppose, fear for his son prevailed over my advice.⁴⁸ Hearing many great things about you – if you were great even in small matters, what would you be like at the reins of a chariot of that size? – I rejoiced, since I still admired the one who had ceased to admire me. 8. Once again you are stepping down into private life with the readiness you always displayed in laying down political office. Even though you set foot in Bithynia, you weren't moved – not even by that place! – to remember me. It was precisely in Bithynia that you received tributes from me – small ones but perhaps not insignificant ones.⁴⁹ 9. Later there arrived a Gaul, a courteous man and a kinsman of Arsacius.⁵⁰ He was involved in a lawsuit and needed the judge's goodwill. This man brought me a letter that was yours but *not* yours. For though it was, I suppose, in your hand, it didn't reflect your disposition, or rather, it reflected that changed disposition. Nothing of your former manner was imprinted on the letter, rather it was bitter and harsh and showed that you were, I presume, under some obligation yet irritated at this obligation. 10. Well, I faulted that letter, but that fellow didn't fault my enthusiasm. After this I resolved to be silent – why should I write to one who was unreceptive? But Martiales ordered me and wouldn't let me refuse. 11. If you wish to state the real reason for your change of heart, you wouldn't need long explanations. But if you cover it up, you can speak forever, but you'll always need an explanation. You won't dispel the charge that way. 12. Do you want to know what comparison occurred to our friends? They think that some

47 Antiochene sophist who had held multiple governorships before being summoned as assessor by the Prefect Honoratus 2. Libanius interceded in B5 and 35 on behalf of Quirinus' son, Honoratus 3, and in B57 for Quirinus' brother, Apolinarius 1.

48 Quirinus declined to take a post under Honoratus in Gaul because his only surviving son, Honoratus 3, was convalescing from an illness, cf. *ep.* 358.

49 Libanius taught at Nicomedia in Bithynia, 344–49, cf. *Or.* 1.48ff..

50 Otherwise unknown.

Eurymus has contrived these things. That Eurymus slandered Castor's brother to him, but Castor didn't stay silent. He spoke out and Polydeuces boxed Eurymus well and truly.⁵¹

66. TO HONORATUS

(Sent to Constantinople, winter 360/1) F251 W254

In the late 350s the emperor Constantius II embarked on a programme to make the empire's Eastern capital at Constantinople the full equal of Rome in the west. A key feature of this programme was a major expansion of the Eastern senate. In the 380s, the philosopher Themistius, adlected to the senate in 355, would claim to have been responsible for transforming the senate from a body of 300 members to a senatorial order comprised of 2000 members (*Or.* 34.13). That process took place over many years, but there was a tremendous burst of activity in 358–59, and Themistius was clearly an important 'recruiting agent' for the new senate, although his precise authority remains obscure (see Introduction to B82). The best-documented case of entry into the enlarged senate is that of Olympius 3, a life-long friend for whom Libanius wrote five letters in 359/60: *epp.* 70/N43, 99/B82 and 252/B83 to Themistius, 251/B66 and 265/B67 to Honoratus 2. Entry into the Eastern senate had three basic requirements: 1) possession of *clarissimus* rank, usually acquired through imperial service, 2) approval by the senate after a vetting or *dokimasia* of an applicant's qualifications, and 3) payment of a senatorial surtax (*follis*) and tenure of the praetorship. In 359 the *follis* was a fixed cash payment of two, four or eight pounds of gold depending on which of the three property classes senators were assigned by the census officials (*censuales*) who reviewed candidates' net worth. At Rome, a 'poor' senator might secure exemption from the *follis*, but not at Constantinople. The praetorship, which Libanius treats as a senatorial liturgy on the model of curial liturgies, was in fact carefully regulated by imperial decree. Minimum payments were stipulated for each of the three property classes, designated primarily for games and construction projects. In theory, the praetorship capped the process by which one entered the senate, but in reality many senators never served as praetors, as B66 makes clear. Since there were only three to five praetors per year (the number varied), most of the hundreds of new senators being created in the late 350s would never in fact have held the office formally. For a brief, but clear account of the two senates, see Jones, *LRE*, 530–42. On the expansion of the Eastern senate, see Heather (1994).

Olympius 3 came from a distinguished curial family at Antioch, but had secured the clarissimate by serving as consular governor of Macedonia in 356, after which he entered the Roman senate with an exemption from the surtax (*follis*) and from the

⁵¹ Plutarch, *Proverbs of Alexander* 74 says simply, 'Eurymnus (*sic*): This man tried to slander Castor to Polydeuces and paid the greatest penalty to them.'

requirement that senators live in the capital, preferring to live in his native Antioch. To facilitate expansion of the Eastern senate, Roman senators resident in the Prefecture of the East (*Oriens*) were required in 359 to transfer to the senate at Constantinople, but they were granted a deferral on the obligation to hold the praetorship because there were many existing senators who had never fulfilled this obligation. Surprisingly, senators who had paid the customary fees at Rome do not appear to have been automatically exempted from fees at Constantinople. Olympius' situation was complicated because the census officials had confused him with another Olympius and were insisting that he pay an old tax and that he should be classed in one of the higher property classes. In the letters to Themistius and Honoratus, Libanius requests 1) that the confusion with the other Olympius be cleared up, 2) that Olympius 3, who had been exempted from the *follis* at Rome, be assessed a moderate *follis* based on his modest means, 3) that he be exempted from the requirement that senators live in the capital, and 4) that he be ensured a deferral on discharge of the praetorship. For a detailed discussion of his case, see Petit (1957b), 366–70 and 376–79, who distinguishes carefully between the senatorial surtax (*follis*) and the praetor's liturgy. These distinctions are blurred in *PLRE* 644, and Dagron (1984), 128–29.

B66–67 are addressed to Honoratus 2, *comes Orientis* in 353–54, Praetorian Prefect of the Gauls in 355/7 and the first man to occupy the new office of Prefect of Constantinople (359–61).

1. I won't hesitate to discuss with you matters of justice (for they're your delight) and you wouldn't get annoyed with people who speak about such things. On the contrary, you'd be upset if anyone who could speak about them should be at all silent! 2. In my opinion, Rhadamanthus⁵² too rejoiced when he was called upon to assist justice – for which he earned a reputation, naturally, since he made justice strong. 3. Well, if you happened to hear about Olympius' character in the same way as you did about the other things, you wouldn't be trusting slanderers and there would be no need of a letter such as this from me. But as things stand, you can learn from many sources that he's a good man. 4. First of all, from the Macedonians, who pray to have a governor just like him though they haven't been able to get one. But those from whom you might learn other things don't wish to instruct you. Perhaps it's to their advantage to obscure the matter, but *I* will reveal it. 5. This Olympius, whom you've twice helped (for twice you held political office among us, and perhaps the third one⁵³ may arrive, too!) was formerly entered

⁵² One of the judges in the Underworld.

⁵³ Honoratus had been governor of Syria prior to 353 and *comes Orientis* 353–54. The 'third' office would be the Prefecture of the East.

on the rolls of the Roman Senate, but just yesterday, so to speak, he became one of yours.⁵⁴ 6. Then he was encumbered with an old tax⁵⁵ (not that he owes it, for how could he? at the time he had nothing to do with you) because he has the same name as another Olympius. He shouldn't deserve to pay that fellow's penalty, since he didn't persuade his parents what name to give him! 7. So, first of all, good sir, resolve to sort out this confusion. Then, in the business of taxes, 'don't let the cargo be greater than the ship', and don't let the rich man on the spot contribute less, but make the absent man, even if he isn't rich, contribute more. In such cases, we need to look to the value of his property, not to 'presence' or 'absence'.⁵⁶ 8. Now Olympius has everything fine and great – except cash. His father too was just, and, in addition, influential and a father of many sons, but his character didn't grow worse even under the pressure of having many children. 9. Olympius, it seems, was imitating him when he became poorer in his governorship over the Macedonians, while he made *them* richer. In this respect, if someone should call him *your* pupil, he wouldn't be off the mark. For these characteristics were long present in you, and they are observable now. 10. For his sake, then, I'm requesting that his tax be moderate,⁵⁷ and, if anyone now tries to compel him to undertake any liturgy,⁵⁸ prevent him, citing the law which granted a deferral to those who had just been enrolled in your Senate, since the law judged that it would not be good for those who came later to spend heavily before those who came earlier. 11. Many things in Constantinople have now changed for the better – how could they not with you in charge? – the distinction of the senatorial office, the beauty of the city's buildings, the fact that public interests are no less important than private interests, the abundant reservoirs of waters, by which it's possible for you to rival even us. 12. Let this too be a new policy, that senators are not harassed by *some* members of the body, and that some don't die in old age without having performed any liturgies, though they've long enjoyed the good things among you, while others, who haven't yet tasted of the good things among you, feel the pain straightaway from the starting line.⁵⁹ For if these things shouldn't come into

54 A senator at Constantinople.

55 This tax (φόρα) is probably an unpaid *folis*.

56 Senators in the City are better positioned to evade payment; non-resident senators are more likely to be classed in higher brackets because they are not on the spot to protect their interests.

57 Since total exemption is not granted at Constantinople (cf. *ep.* 252/B84), Libanius requests that the *folis* be moderate.

58 The praetorship.

59 An allusion to senators who have never held the praetorship and who never will, so long as they can shift the burden on to new arrivals.

force now, when would they come into force? 13. Someone will say that it's intolerable that those who've been enrolled in the Senate don't show up there.⁶⁰ Absolutely, unless there should be an impediment. Now as for Olympius, if he does *that*, he's betrayed his mother. The old lady greatly desires to depart this life in the embrace of her son, and if he doesn't grant her this favour, he'll be more impious than Hippomenes.⁶¹ You'd be justified in admiring his attitude and in releasing him from the unjust exactions.

67. TO HONORATUS

(Sent to Constantinople, spring 361) F265 W258

Olympius 3 has also appealed to friends at court to secure the ends discussed in B66. They have procured an imperial letter insuring that Olympius 'suffer no harm', as Libanius puts it, meaning that his senatorial surtax (*foliis*) will be lowered, his praetorship deferred, and he will be able to live in Antioch. Libanius now reassures Honoratus that the appeal to the emperor was not intended to imply lack of confidence in Honoratus' ability or distrust of his intentions. It is a delicate moment because Olympius' friends have gone over the Prefect's head and he might become difficult if he thought he was being manipulated. Libanius' acknowledgement that fulfilment of the emperor's letter is contingent on the Prefect's vote is not mere flattery. The Prefect submitted a recommendation to the senate, which ultimately determined acceptance or rejection of a candidate and the terms on which he was to enter the senate. The Prefect was well placed to block admission of those he disliked.

1. Now look, there's even a letter from the emperor desiring that our Olympius suffer no harm, not on the grounds that your own judgement was inadequate and didn't always pursue the policy that nothing be done apart from what was just, but the man's friends – and these are many and powerful – held the view that it was better to pass over nothing that might confer help on him rather than omit anything, and they took care that there should be a letter and they ordered it sent, so that it was impossible to refuse. 2. Nonetheless, if anything arrives from there in accordance with our design, we will not be unaware who had charge of the entire matter nor the fact that execution of a letter of that sort is contingent on your vote.

⁶⁰ Residency in the capital was mandatory for senators at both Rome and Constantinople. Olympius had been granted exemption at Rome and sought the same exemption at Constantinople.

⁶¹ Mythical king of Athens who tossed his daughter to a man-eating horse, cf. Diogenes, *Proverbs* 3.1.

68. TO MODESTUS

(Carried by Strategius, summer 359) F242 W245

B68–75 are addressed to Domitius Modestus 2, *comes Orientis* (358–62), Prefect of Constantinople (362–63), Praetorian Prefect of the East (369–77). Ammianus is hostile towards Modestus for his harshness as a judge at the Scythopolis trials in 359 (19.12.6) and for encouraging Valens' worst instincts through servile flattery (29.1.10), but Modestus proved extremely obliging to Libanius, who wrote him 49 letters between 358 and 365. There are few high officials whom he could approach with greater confidence.

B68 concerns a portico of Dionysus commissioned by Modestus in Antioch, with the stipulation that the city's decurions pay for and oversee the transport of building materials from the coast to the city. Even former imperial officials (*honorati*) were pressed into service, though they were legally immune from such tasks, and there was much ill-feeling about the project, which was dubbed 'the Count's Castle' (*ep.* 196/N68; cf. B73). In summer 359, the project was nearing completion, and the architect Strategius travelled to Modestus in the hope of receiving some reward for his efforts. The fact that he asked Libanius for B68 suggests that he was not on close terms with the *comes*, but Modestus may have seen little of Strategius simply because he was constantly away from Antioch, touring the Eastern provinces due to the threat of invasion.

1. The poets seem to me to have reflected well on Eros when they called him 'unconquered',⁶² as even Strategius is well and truly on the move from here and is running off to see your dear self, abandoning wife, children and all his other pleasures. Yet he endeavours to hide his condition, like a man running away because of his taxes. But it hasn't escaped my notice that he was making you his business and attending to that business not without pleasure. 2. So it's obvious that you'll look upon him with a kindly gaze, having in him, in addition to other things, an accurate narrator of your portico, for which he happily endured a lot of heat and smoke, since he was providing you a means, through his own labours, to acquire renown. What was no bright hope in the beginning is now coming to completion and allows no one of any age to pass it by in silence, rather the portico draws one's eyes and whoever has seen it has been amazed.⁶³ 3. It's fitting that the whole city should feel gratitude towards you and you towards him. For you conceived the project,

62 Sophocles, *Antigone* 781.

63 Cf. *ep.* 196/N68 for the portico's great length, breadth and height. It was probably in front of the Temple of Dionysus, which was still intact in the 380s, when the portico was used as a law-court, cf. *Orr.* 45.26; 30.51, with Downey (1961), 179–80.

while he is managing it for you. It's sufficient gratitude if you praise him and think of him as we do. 4. Our vote is that Strategius is a noble fellow whom no one has outdone in doing favours. Thus, he's always searching to make better repayment, and in searching he has always found a way.

69. TO MODESTUS

(359/60) F108 W107

B69 is a good example of a letter type common in Libanius' corpus, a request to a high official, usually a provincial governor, to summon and receive a friend, so that it may become public knowledge that the friend has a personal relationship with the official, thus enhancing his standing in the local community. In this case, Libanius asks Modestus to receive the kinsmen of Eudaemon 3, an Egyptian grammarian, poet and advocate who taught and practised law in Elusa. These kinsmen are of modest means, but they are people of culture and deserve Modestus' attention, so that their enemies will think twice before offering them further trouble. On Eudaemon's activities, see B151.

1. You know and could report to anyone else how much Eudaemon deserves from the sons of the Hellenes, how dear he is to me, and how he rejoices in your prosperity. Since that is your attitude, it's perfectly clear that you'd also help the man with pleasure. 2. This is a simple matter for you as you've gone to Egypt. He has in Pelusium an aged father and a family second to none in distinction of birth, but due to their gentle courtesy they haven't much money. 3. If you wish to see them, you will, by giving the order to 'summon Eudaemon's kinsmen', satisfy both them and me: me, for having been honoured, them, since they'll have the reassurance that you didn't pass over them in silence. Even if they're now up against some very difficult people, they'll see these people become reasonable when you do that. I could have written more, but you don't permit it. When one needs help companions of the Muses, such as Eudaemon, you know no delay!

70. TO MODESTUS

(Winter 360) F154 W154

Libanius regrets that Modestus has accepted some, but not all, of his pupils who presented themselves to set up a practice at the tribunal of the *comes*. In the fourth century, advocates were organised into corporations with specified rights and privileges, and they were attached to the tribunals of particular magistrates. Libanius

hopes that Modestus will appoint the others and, moreover, ensure that they get cases to plead. It may be enough, he notes, for the rich simply to enjoy the prestige of holding a place at the *comes*' bar, but youths of modest means absolutely must get cases and plead in court because they must make money. Advocacy was a preferred career path for Libanius' students, especially for those who needed to make money quickly, see Petit (1957a), 176–84.

1. Of my colts whom I led from the meadows of the Muses and presented to you, you see some who've been summoned by you, but others are unsummoned. I consider the former blessed from the honour shown by you, the latter blessed by their longing for you. They reveal by the very fact that they come to you all on their own that they would reasonably be among the summoned. 2. So you will show concern for all of them: the well-to-do, that they acquire a reputation, the impoverished ones, that they also acquire money. But something more ought to be shown by you for those who appear not to have been judged worthy of honour, since for some of them, even if they don't plead in court, the honour is no small matter, while for the others there is only one consolation: to plead and receive a fee.

71. TO MODESTUS

(360) F220 W221

Libanius requests of Modestus, who could be a harsh judge, to put on a kindly face when presiding over the case of Calliopius 2, who had been an associate teacher with Libanius, then held a minor post in the imperial chancellery before becoming an assessor, probably in Euphratensis in 360. He is now being prosecuted for his conduct as an assessor. On judicial savagery, see MacMullen (1988).

1. Advocates seek goodwill from judges, not only those who recognise that they have no strong suit, but also those who can be confident from the justice of their cause. 2. Now, I know perfectly well that this Calliopius commits no crime, either great or small, and I make this very normal request of you, to show him a kindly gaze at the trial. That way he would be able to rely on the real justice of his cause, that is, if he weren't terrified. 3. But if it isn't possible to mention goodwill to you, it's nonetheless possible to pray to the gods to make you that way. In particular, I pray, 'Zeus Meilichius,'⁶⁴ so gentle a father towards mankind, make the noble Modestus propitious to Calliopius, and make him like yourself! [4.] Also, let him recall Zeus Meilichius when

64 The epithet Meilichius ('gentle') is used of various gods, but especially Zeus, to stress that the divinity is kind and susceptible to propitiation.

he gives judgement, in order that I may rejoice with my friend, and may Montius⁶⁵ take pleasure beneath the earth, for something of this sort is said of those who are departed this life.’⁶⁶

72. TO MODESTUS

(Carried by Eusebius and Agroecius, 361) F293 W296

Advocacy was a lucrative career and it also positioned one well for a post as an assessor or a governor. Although it did not confer curial immunity, it gave one access to a governor’s influence and duties at the bar might be a pretext why a particular liturgy needed to be declined. On city councillors (*curiales*, decurions), see Jones, *LRE*, 513–14.

In B72, Libanius intervenes for the Armenian brothers, Eusebius xi and Agroecius i, former pupils who have become advocates at the tribunal of Domitius Modestus and who are being pursued by a city council. Libanius urges their exemption on grounds of poor health and poverty. Libanius’ Armenian students are almost invariably decurions who do not succeed in finding imperial posts, cf. Petit (1957a), 132–34. I include this letter also for its interesting detail about the five marriageable sisters in need of dowries.

1. My companions and your advocates, men presented by me to you and admired by you, these very letter-bearers – men whom I often rescued from your righteous anger are now attempting by decrees to drive them from your doors! Or rather, they’re threatening Eusebius and they’re already dragging off the other one towards a civic duty that requires a sound constitution. 2. Agroecius is so robust that he’s spent more money on doctors than anyone, since he always needs to be in a doctor’s hands! But also, they have five sisters sitting within the house who are of an age to need husbands, but who are helpless due to poverty. Nowadays, good birth means little. 3. So, consider that it involves shame for me if I should prove unable to assist my friends, and that it’s no fine thing for you that the old law assisting advocates be rescinded during your administration,⁶⁷ and persuade the more brazen of the councillors that not everything will be possible for them.

65 Montius Magnus 11, the Quaestor of Gallus who, at the Caesar’s instigation, was lynched by the troops (Ammianus 14.7.12–18). He appears to have been the father of Calliopius.

66 The prayer alludes to Plato, *Phaedo* 117bc.

67 Libanius implies that an ‘old law’ helped advocates secure immunity from curial duties. Extant laws in the Theodosian Code proclaim the opposite, e.g. *CTh* 12.1.98 (AD 383), but in practice, to judge from Libanius, advocates were usually successful in their attempts to evade curial obligations.

73. TO MODESTUS

(361) F617 W532

Libanius had requested in *ep.* 308/N75 that Modestus write to Acacius 8, governor of Galatia in 361, to encourage him to favour Maximus of Ancyra and his son Hyperechius. He now writes to thank Modestus for carrying out the request.

1. If I knew how to twist and turn about the doors of the powerful, I too would be one of the powerful. As things stand, I'm weak though not at all ashamed – it's enough for me, as for the nightingale,⁶⁸ to sing. 2. I presumed that I ought not to send you many letters, since you were engaged in much business and were receiving many letters – for surely we ought not to add more cargo to ships that are heavy laden. But since you desire a multitude of letters, see how I'm 'called to the Lydian plain'!⁶⁹ 3. Well, I'm grateful for the letter you sent to Acacius, for it showed you to be serious and to wish to see action, while another man would have got off with a perfunctory job. But you must look into the matter of your stoa, so that something favourable can be said about it, and that you're not, in thinking that you're gratifying Dionysus, distressing Dionysus' father, Zeus himself.⁷⁰

74. TO MODESTUS

(Carried by Hyperechius to Constantinople, winter 362/3) F804 W714

During autumn 362 Julian nominated Modestus to be Prefect of Constantinople. Modestus travelled to Constantinople via Ancyra, where he delivered two letters, *epp.* 791/B108 to the governor, Maximus 19, and 792/B180 to Hyperechius. He then wrote to Libanius about the plan, already discussed in Antioch and at Ancyra, to make Hyperechius a senator at Constantinople and then, with imperial approval, to award him a political office, probably a governorship. Libanius writes back to Modestus delighted at the Prefect's enthusiasm for promoting Hyperechius' interests. Julian's premature death short-circuited all these plans. On Hyperechius' career, see the introduction to B179.

⁶⁸ At *Declamation* 5.141, Libanius calls Socrates the 'Attic nightingale'. See also Pliny, *Natural History* 10.29.

⁶⁹ That is, 'summoned to an activity in which I excel'. Libanius uses the expression often, cf. *epp.* 1318, 1474, though it does not occur in Classical literature. The Lydians were famous for their cavalry, cf. Herodotus 1.79.

⁷⁰ An allusion to the portico of Dionysus mentioned in *epp.* 196/N68 and 242/B68. It will gratify Dionysus, but the injustices inflicted on the *curiales* burdened with the expenses may offend Zeus, guardian of justice.

1. I was pleased that you summoned me for precisely the same purpose I did you. Obviously, I've persuaded you to help, if you've taken up my position and are encouraging me to assist Hyperechius! 2. Nor will I omit anything that's possible and I'll undertake the impossible! Even if in vain, nonetheless it befits a friend, and something would long since have been done for the lad, had his slow arrival not hampered the business.⁷¹ He certainly didn't dash my hopes; oh no, they're also bright (I'm spitting into my bosom⁷² in obedience to the proverb!). 3. It seems that some god has managed the affair well, wishing Hyperechius to gain both favours, the one you have power to grant⁷³ and the one which he with power over all can grant. At any rate, he's gained the former favour, but he could still be deprived of the latter. 4. So now you'll instruct him and make him an orator and great in other respects, in marriage and reputation, but in particular by what's done in the Senate, and subsequent gifts⁷⁴ will come to a man in a position to accept them. 5. By the gods whom you've long admired and whom you now openly acknowledge,⁷⁵ outdo his own father's goodwill toward Hyperechius and imitate my own. If you do that, you'll surpass his father's goodwill!

75. TO MODESTUS

(Carried by Julianus to Constantinople, May/June 363) F1367 W1429a

This letter was written while Julian's Persian campaign was going well and prisoners were arriving in Syria from the front. A civic disturbance, provoked by 'certain vile homeless people' (probably an allusion to Christian monks), had induced the Prefect Modestus to withdraw briefly from Constantinople, but news has reached Antioch that he has safely re-entered the city. Seeck (*BLZG* 214) surmised that the monks were protesting against the restoration of pagan cult under Julian, Petit (*FOL* 169) that they were protesting against the apostasy of their Prefect. Libanius congratulates Modestus and recommends to him Julianus 14, a member of an extended, prominent clan in Tarsus with whom Libanius had close ties. His brothers were Demetrius 2 and Hierocles 3, both of whom served as governors, and he was father of Alypius 4, the *comes* to whom the emperor Julian entrusted the rebuilding of the Temple in

71 In *ep.* 777 Libanius had encouraged Hyperechius to come to Antioch in 362 while Julian was in residence; in *ep.* 792 he encouraged him to accompany the new Prefect Modestus on his journey to Constantinople to take up office. Hyperechius seized neither opportunity.

72 To avert the vengeance of Nemesis.

73 The support of Modestus as Prefect of Constantinople in his bid for entry into the senate.

74 A political post from the emperor.

75 Modestus had been nominally Christian under Constantius, worshipped the gods openly under Julian, and became an Arian Christian after Julian's death.

Jerusalem. Julianus himself was a senator who had governed two provinces, Phrygia before 359 and Euphratensis in 361, and has now been appointed a tax assessor in Bithynia (*censitor Bithyniae*) in 362/3. He wished to visit Modestus in the capital. He is also discussed in B76 and 82. On ecclesiastical violence in Constantinople, see McLynn (1992); also, *Or.* 1.41–45 on the religious rioting that formed the backdrop to Libanius' expulsion from Constantinople in 342.

1. You see what great rewards virtues create? You're the same men,⁷⁶ holding office previously and held in trust now, and you didn't cease to be tested in public affairs after the change of regimes. The reason is that you weren't among those who bought political offices back then nor, in turn, among those who used them to transact business, although this was allowed and people who wanted to be honest were despised. 2. That divine man,⁷⁷ hated by the Persians, seems to me to have understood this and to have given to you as a reward for your voluntary poverty the highest office after the imperial station,⁷⁸ and to Julianus a business requiring the justice of Rhadamanthus. 3. Although his concerns are confined to Bithynia, love draws him over to you, for he couldn't pass up so fine a friend being nearby. He'll surely enjoy your sweet company. The imperial courier⁷⁹ freed us from the great fears implanted by the false tales that arrived a while back, to the effect that the City was doing and suffering dreadful things. 4. He announced that certain vile homeless people had lost their minds, while the better sort, who were in the majority, kept their wits about them, and that you had made no mistakes, but bowed to the wind and came to terms speedily. Your landing was splendid and admired, packed with an appreciative crowd! Your chariot was hidden from view by men thronging around and applauding! 5. The imperial courier recounted these things to me and I broadcast them, driving out the false tale with the truth. Your letter has crossed the Euphrates, but it's no surprise if it's slow in coming into the emperor's hands. 6. He is advancing and overwhelming the empire of the Persians. Where he is now, only he would know well, but what he's doing, he makes known through prisoners, from whom we learn that he's moving fast and the cities are in ruins. We're at a loss at how to receive the prisoners. 7. I said these things as a defence of

⁷⁶ Modestus 2 and Julianus 14.

⁷⁷ The emperor Julian.

⁷⁸ The Prefecture of Constantinople.

⁷⁹ Στρατιώτης or 'soldier' is the word normally used by Libanius for an imperial courier (*agens in rebus*), though in the current context it may genuinely refer to a soldier.

the imperial courier and to give pleasure to you, while also encouraging myself.⁸⁰

76. TO NICOCLES

(Sent to Constantinople, May/June 363) F1368 W1429b

The civic rioting that threatened Modestus' safety (cf. B75) must now be explained to the emperor, who may punish the whole city for a disturbance provoked by the monks. As Antioch had appealed to Libanius to intercede with the angry Julian, Constantinople turned to Nicocles, a grammarian at Constantinople also interested in rhetoric and philosophy. He was a former teacher of the emperor Julian (c. 348) and influential during Julian's reign. In 340, he had offered, in order to undermine another sophist, to present Libanius with 40 students, effectively setting him up with a school. Libanius' dealings with him were not fully candid and provoked hostility (*Or.* 1.31–35), but the two were reconciled in 363 and worked to mutual advantage. Nicocles is here reported to have 'restored the Prefect to the City' and he will soon travel to Julian to plead for a pardon. Libanius empathises since he has already been through the 'storm', that is, tumultuous relations between emperor and city, and the 'storm' has not yet subsided, since he must still attempt to dissuade the emperor from carrying out his threat to make Tarsus his capital on his return from the Persian campaign (*Orr.* 1.132; 15.86; Ammianus 23.2.5). On Nicocles, see Kaster (1988), 317–21 (correcting previous accounts).

Libanius also requests that Nicocles persuade the emperor to reconsider the appointment of Julianus 14 as *censor* (cf. B75). It was a burdensome, thankless appointment, and Julianus hoped for something better. Seeck, *BLZG* 191, Petit, *FOL* 142 and Norman (1992), vol. 2, 238, assumed that Julianus got this unpleasant task because he was a Christian, to be identified with the tax assessor in Cappadocia to whom Gregory Nazianzen wrote in 374–75, but Julianus' brothers were pagans, and his son Alypius must surely have been a pagan to be entrusted with the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem. *PLRE* 472 identifies Gregory's correspondent as Julianus 17.

1. I'm likely to feel gratitude towards those who caused disturbances there, if for that reason we shall have you back here again. I hear that you restored the Prefect to the City and that you're going to the Emperor on behalf of the City, since she saw very clearly, on this issue at least, that you alone would be able to plead for a pardon for the people. Then I shall see *you* careworn, breathless, practising your speeches, doing and suffering what I did during

⁸⁰ The imperial courier needs defending because Modestus may be irritated that his letter will take so long to reach the emperor. Libanius pleads that the war zone is disrupted and the emperor's advance dramatic.

the ‘storm’, when you were present and helped me, sometimes openly, at other times through your rhetorical skill.⁸¹ 2. But indeed, I just spoke like a man who had escaped from dangers. Yet, though some trials have been endured, others are approaching. You’ll accomplish however much you wish, and you wouldn’t need assistants, but I would need you and your fellow citizens, as well as the offspring of Leda⁸² and Zeus Meilichius⁸³ in the face of the ‘storm’. 3. Whether we really are wicked people, I don’t know, but we seem to be. And whether we’ll be punished again, I don’t know, but Tarsus being preferred to us – and you know that he’s fleeing us and choosing them – what punishment could be more bitter? Good sir, come quickly to us, that you may labour for both cities, since we too shall employ you as an ambassador. 4. You’ve long been a friend to the noble Julianus⁸⁴ from your acquaintance there and here, and even previously from the admiration in which you held him when he governed the Phrygians. But now you might be all in all to him, if you calculate rightly to what end and by whom you were sent. As for those whom your pupil⁸⁵ considers good men, it would be a gain for you as a teacher to assist in creating a good reputation for them. 5. Reconsider the assessment of this fellow. We aren’t asking to escape your notice; to the contrary, like skilful poets, we’re asking you for a critical evaluation. You’ll find both sound judgement and justice in him, qualities which will make you better disposed toward him and the emperor too when you report them to him.

77. TO ITALICIANUS

(Carried by Faustinus, autumn 361) F666 W580

Italicianus, the *vicarius Asiae* in 361, was pursuing a marriage with the sister of Thalassius 2 and Bassianus 2 (cf. B10). B77 is a model letter of recommendation to him as *vicarius* with an amusing comment on the common run of students.

1. This Faustinus⁸⁶ is foremost both among the Pisidians and among the young men who surround me. Now, you could learn from others as well how

81 After the riots at Constantinople in winter 362/63, Nicocles came to Antioch as an ambassador to plead on behalf of the city. Libanius here implies that he was helped by Nicocles’ open expressions of support and by the speeches he delivered. Cf. 810/N99 praising his eloquence on the embassy.

82 The Dioscuri, Castor and Polydeuces, invoked by sailors in distress.

83 The ‘Gentle Zeus’, as at B71.4 (see note).

84 Julianus 14, mentioned in the previous letter.

85 The Emperor Julian.

86 The fate of this exemplary youth is unknown.

things are for him at home: the distinction of his family, their brilliance in public service, the fact that his forebears have been and still are a bulwark to the city, but I've a right to speak of the matters in my holy circle. 2. Though he lives among boys who are asleep and who presume that eloquence is nothing, since the soul is for other pursuits, he didn't entertain this opinion in his own soul, but holding the conviction that those without a share in culture were no better off than slaves, he left to others theatres, mimes and the mania for horses, while he himself devoted his body to hard work, and he made his soul more beautiful and is a godsend to his eager teachers, not a burden to such as them, since he thinks that the labours themselves are a respite from labours! 3. In what has been said, you doubtless have an indication both of his self-control and of the good order of his daily life, since whoever has bound himself to books has set himself apart from evil. 4. Well, if either his father had survived or his grandfather hadn't succumbed to old age, he would have surpassed even his teachers as time went on, but now – for he's obliged at this point to preserve his possessions – he is, on the one hand, deprived of further tears,⁸⁷ but, on the other hand, he has rhetorical vigour – enough for the law courts and enough to make his fatherland greater. 5. There has come about from on high this additional good fortune: since you are governor, it must be the case that my companions run before the wind, with Athena sending a favourable breeze!

78. TO CLEARCHUS

(Sent to Constantinople, winter 360/1) F253 W256

B78–81 are addressed to or concern Clearchus 1, a former pupil of Nicocles and a close associate of Themistius in the late 350s at Constantinople, where he had influence and held a post that cannot be determined with certainty. His subsequent career was distinguished: *vicarius Asiae* (363–66), Proconsul of Asia (366–67), Prefect of Constantinople (372–73 and 382–84), Consul (384). Libanius recommended many men to him, but frequently complained of his failure to help. In this letter, Libanius rebukes him for failing to assist Olympius 3, Libanius' life-long friend whose problems about entry into the senate at Constantinople are discussed in B66–67 and 83.

1. 'They're liars who say that you're sprung from Zeus', claimed some offspring of Zeus, a son of Heracles, to someone around Troy.⁸⁸ It's also said

⁸⁷ Tears from hard, but satisfying, work.

⁸⁸ Tlepolemus to Sarpedon, *Iliad* 5.635.

that you're very influential in the City, but it's proven that this isn't the case. You certainly didn't give any help to Olympius, though he's being wronged in every respect. 2. If you truly do have influence, then we must acknowledge something worse, that you've no concern whatsoever for your friends. I can't imagine what we could suffer in your absence that would be more dreadful than the harm we endure when you're present. 3. If you plead ignorance of what's going on, you won't appear to be speaking plausibly and you won't be any more likely to avoid criticism, for the very fact that you don't investigate such matters is a source of criticism. 4. So choose whichever of the three you wish: either to put a stop to the wrongdoers, or to claim that you're a wretched orator or that you're weak. I know that you'll claim, ironically, the third choice, but it'll not go unnoticed that you're being ironical.

79. TO CLEARCHUS

(Carried by Julianus to Constantinople, autumn 361) F668 W582

Libanius introduces Julianus 15/vii, a Syrian learned in Greek, Latin and Roman law; he was appointed governor of Phoenicia in 362 and *comes Orientis* in 364. His son studied with Libanius in 364 (*ep.* 1261).

1. This Julianus is a fitting acquisition for you, since he's pre-eminent in the Greek tongue, but also in the tongue of the rulers, full of legal knowledge, a formidable orator, a genuine friend, a man who knows how to receive wounds even in order to help a friend. Such is the grace of culture in him that he's able to captivate as many people as he wishes – however many he addresses, that's how many he has won over! 2. Whoever wants to understand the man may do so from this one fact: I hold him to be the finest man under the sun, and you would discover that anyone who isn't quarrelsome and shameless considers it a gain to live with Julianus. Consequently, Salutius⁸⁹ has contrived for him to be a travelling companion, since, in his view, he'll have every difficulty made easy if he should enjoy Julianus' presence. 3. Olympius,⁹⁰ too, would have written you things similar to my own on the man's behalf, praising the toils which you'll undertake for his sake, if he weren't by chance absent in Apamea spectating at the Olympic games.⁹¹

89 Salutius 3, whose movements in autumn 361 are unclear. On Julian's arrival in Constantinople, he was promoted to be Prefect of the East (361–65, 365–67).

90 Olympius 3.

91 The games were staged by Libanius' kinsman Sopater 2, the uncle of Iamblichus 2, who is the subject of B19–22. Cf. *ep.* 727, 663 (to Sopater concerning the games).

80. TO THEODORUS

(Spring 364) F1188 W1173

Theodorus 11, an assessor to Clearchus 1, has decided to enrol a young son in Libanius' school, though it appears that the lad has not yet arrived. Libanius writes to Theodorus to question his choice of a pedagogue, a former sailor who seems to Libanius too ready with the whip. A Julianus, probably an older kinsman of the boy, has himself threatened to beat the pedagogue if he does not desist. Libanius disliked corporal punishment, but the pedagogue may have been following the father's orders. Pedagogues served as surrogate parents for schoolchildren and adolescent males studying away from home. They normally accompanied a boy to school, waited for him while he was in class, helped him with homework and, in general, supervised his moral conduct, cf. Cribiore (2001), 47–50 (roles of pedagogues), 65–73 (corporal punishment of students).

1. Clearchus outdid his father in his concern for the province of Asia.⁹² The latter was good and just, and he discerned what was in the interest of those governed by him, but his son's intellect is even keener and more astute at recognising policies through which the cities might flourish. 2. You accompanied him with the intent of teaching,⁹³ but you've become, it appears to me, his pupil. I count you fortunate for sharing in the good report about his decisions, even if the work was due to Clearchus' guidance. 3. I'm concerned about the young son you entrusted to me (and not unconcerned about his failure to appear here yet), since the noble Julianus described to me the crudeness of his pedagogue, and how he prevented the man who knew nothing except how to mete out blows from doing such things. The fellow was deterred by the threat of a beating as he watched the whip being brought to Julianus this time. 4. My view was that he'd arrived from a sea voyage, and despite having been a bad sailor, it seemed to you for some reason that he might make a good pedagogue. The accursed man has taken to beating by virtue of the fact that that's what he did to the sea with his own oar! But he doesn't realise that the back of the sea and the back of a freeborn child are not the same thing, or rather he does realise it, now that he's fearing for his own sake!

92 An allusion to Clearchus 1's appointment as *vicarius Asiae* in 363.

93 By offering legal advice as his assessor.

81. TO CLEARCHUS

(Autumn 364) F1266 W1049

B81 is one of two letters mentioning a dispute between Clearchus and his former teacher Nicocles, who has done something to offend Clearchus. Despite the loyalty owed to his former teacher, particularly after Julian's death when Nicocles' influence inevitably waned, Clearchus is bent on punishing him by harming the family's interests. In *ep.* 1265/N134 to Nicocles, Libanius gave assurances that he would remonstrate with Clearchus: 'Anyway, I did not like Clearchus behaving rudely towards your family, but since he has chosen to cause you pain rather than win praise, I shall make his correction my concern, and he will receive a letter of reproof'. B81 is the promised letter of reproof.

1. Your fine deeds are wonderful and there's much splendid talk to the effect that you're responsible for many good things among your subjects, but the fact that Nicocles fares badly at your hands has been a source of discouragement to not a few people. What happens to distinguished people, whether good or ill, cannot possibly go unnoticed. 2. Yet I counselled you when you set out from us to do nothing of the sort you are said to be doing, and you promised, but you spoke falsely, and though you said that you'd rise above anger, you revealed that anger dominates you, not considering that to take action in anger would be characteristic of ordinary men, but to be unwilling to avenge oneself, though it could be done, is the mark of men of real worth. 3. Yet, why do I say 'avenge oneself', since I don't know what Nicocles did to harm you in those old times. I'm witness to what he claims, but as to those things which you suppose to have been spoken against you, if you should have to prove them, you wouldn't be able to. 4. It's a bad business to exact public justice for some hidden motive – it isn't even to exact justice, it's to commit wrong. The man who causes pain before conducting an investigation wouldn't be ranked among those who exact vengeance. 5. Clearchus, this is Nicocles, to whom your father entrusted you, to whom you yourself entrusted your brother; he knew your mother and he wouldn't have done wrong toward his own sons – I call 'pupils' 'sons'. 6. But let's grant that he has made some sort of mistake. Now which is better for everyone to know and hear, that Clearchus bore no malice or that Clearchus used his influence from political office for avenging himself on his enemies? Even if in other respects you seem to be just, by this *one* thing you'll have brought great discredit on yourself. 7. You ought not to fear only the criticisms arising from this affair, but also to fear the shifts of fortune, for the goddess takes pleasure in lifting up the man who is prostrate and in hurling down the lofty

one. 'Victory shifts from man to man'.⁹⁴ And exiles drove out the sons of Pisistratus.⁹⁵ 8. So, if you've heard from Delphi that the present circumstances will remain immutable for both you and them, then do as you wish, having bid farewell to what is noble. But if (for right-minded people at least) nothing is beyond the realm of Hope, then don't be too oppressive towards those experiencing misfortune, so that if they ever do pull themselves up, they may praise your character.

82. TO THEMISTIUS

(Carried by Julianus to Constantinople, winter 358/9) F40 W38

B82–85 are addressed to Themistius 1, the distinguished philosopher at Constantinople who played a central role in the expansion of the senate in Constantinople beginning in 358–59 and who served as a philosophical and political advisor to all emperors from Constantius II to Theodosius with the exception of Julian, whose philosophical confidants were Themistius' Neoplatonist rivals. Libanius had known Themistius since his early teaching days in the capital and always held him in the highest regard.

B82 concerns the entrance into the senate in 359 of Julianus 14, whose attempt to avoid appointment as a tax assessor in Bithynia later in 363 is described in B75–76. In 358/9, Julianus had been willing to become a senator, but sought exemption from the surtax, the *foliis*, and perhaps the praetorship, though Libanius does not mention it specifically. The Praetorian Prefect of the East, Hermogenes, granted exemption, but Libanius requests that Themistius confirm the exemption. Based on what authority could Themistius block an exemption granted by a Praetorian Prefect? He is clearly a person of great influence, since Libanius speaks here of Themistius 'guiding the City' and the City 'turning her reins over to you'. The letter has traditionally been used as the principal piece of evidence that Themistius was Proconsul of Constantinople in 358–59 and that he oversaw expansion of the senate by virtue of the Proconsul's authority. On this view, he laid down the office in late 359 when it was transformed into a Prefecture of Constantinople, an office first occupied by Honoratus 2.

In 383/4, Themistius himself became Prefect of Constantinople and this assumption of high office by a philosopher drew criticism. In response, Themistius composed *Oration 34 In Reply to Those who Found Fault with Him for Accepting Public Office*, in which he reviewed his involvement in politics over the span of his career. Of his activities in 358–59, he wrote, 'I have had the people in my care from that time when I restored the bread dole, I have been making provision for the senate in my

⁹⁴ *Iliad* 6.339.

⁹⁵ The exiled Alcmaeonid clan helped to overthrow the tyranny of Pisistratus' sons at Athens in 510 BC, cf. Herodotus 5.62–65.

thoughts from that time when I filled up the register of my fellow members from a scant three hundred to two thousand' (ch. 13). That is all. There is no mention of any formal office prior to the prefecture of 383/4. Heather and Moncur (2001), 44–47, conclude that Themistius never was Proconsul, rightly pointing out that no source ever names Themistius as Proconsul and that it is inconceivable that he could omit so important an office in the context of *Oration* 34. Libanius' language is too ambiguous to prove anything either way. However, a law from the Theodosian Code (6.4.12; AD 361) seems to distinguish Themistius from former proconsuls: 'Praetors shall be designated... there shall be present ten of the men of highest rank among the Senators who have been consuls ordinary and who have borne the honour of the prefecture; also those exalted with proconsular rank; in addition, the philosopher Themistius, whose learning enhances his rank (...*proconsulari etiam honore sublimis, Themistius quoque philosophus, cuius auget scientia dignitatem*...); also those Senators...' What is remarkable, if Heather and Moncur are right, is that Themistius had such enormous influence without occupying an official office with defined prerogatives. Concerning entry into the senate, Libanius writes to him and no one else, and he always treats Themistius as the linchpin in any negotiations. If Themistius wasn't the Proconsul, then who was and why doesn't Libanius ever mention him? After autumn 359, Libanius wrote simultaneously to the new Prefect *and* to Themistius, who continued to have real authority (cf. *epp.* 251/B66 and 252/B84, both from winter 360/1) until his eclipse under Julian.

1. I rejoice with you for guiding the City, but no more than I do with the City for turning her reins over to you! Although you have no need for power, she does need a good leader, and who in her view could have priority over you, through whom she's become greater in men, some of whom possess virtue with wealth, while others have no money but a nature superior to money? 2. May it be your wish, good sir, that poor men of this sort make up the complement of the senate, but if anyone should require gold⁹⁶ of them, you'll prevent it, so that sharing in the blessings among you doesn't become for them a source of evils. 3. Now, other men will speak to those through whom they presume they'll get justice, but do you, for my sake, save a friend of yours and mine who has nothing apart from his reputation. He is Julianus, brother of Hierocles in lineage and character. 4. When I saw that he was being enrolled among you, I began to laugh and reflected that his poverty would very soon strike him from the list. Then I checked my laugh, since, apparently, it was to be sufficient for you to have a man who hadn't thought it right to get rich illegally when it was possible to do so. But when a letter came to the effect that he too was obliged to pay a tax in gold, instead of

96 The senatorial surtax, the *foliis*.

laughing I was shocked and decided that we needed to seek refuge in the mercy of Hermogenes.⁹⁷ And so we did. 5. On learning the truth of the matter, Hermogenes released him from his tormentors, whose torments would have ended in just that, torment, since there was nothing to get from him! 6. So Hermogenes has exempted him,⁹⁸ but there's another chain, which will, unless you undo it, be a riddle for us, our friend being simultaneously released and bound. But you'll solve the riddle, confirming the first favour with a second⁹⁹ and assisting a man who's an acquaintance and who borrows money. I'm aware of that and he isn't ashamed of it. 7. Presumably no one will oppose you when you speak about his lack of means, but if anyone is so perverse that he doesn't voice the same opinions as you do, send him to Phrygia, and after obeying you, he'll report back that Julianus is poor.

83. TO THEMISTIUS

(Carried by Miccalus to Constantinople, early 360) F99 W98

B83–84 concern the entrance of Olympius 3 into the senate at Constantinople (see the detailed introduction to B66–67). In *ep.* 70/N43 to Themistius, written in summer 359, Libanius had briefly outlined Olympius' situation and requested assistance. By late autumn nothing had been done and Olympius' older brother, Miccalus, carried B83 to Constantinople in order to prod Themistius into action. But the situation only became more muddled as the months passed, since the census officials (*censuales*) mistakenly saddled Olympius with the unpaid tax of another Olympius. In the winter of 360/1 Libanius simultaneously wrote to the Prefect Honoratus 2 (B66) and to Themistius (B84) in an effort to sort out the problem. It is worth noting that B84 reintroduces the case anew; Themistius was undoubtedly swamped with similar requests.

1. Your enthusiasm for Olympius ought to be brimful and a letter indicating that fact should be making its way to me from there, and there ought to be a letter from me to you praising your enthusiasm, but once again, you see, there are letters about the same business. 2. What's the reason for this? You certainly aren't lazy about your friends' needs nor do you lack the influence,

⁹⁷ Hermogenes 3, *PPO Orientis* 358–60.

⁹⁸ In B83 from two years later, Libanius acknowledges that exemptions from the surtax were not being granted at Constantinople.

⁹⁹ The second favour was probably confirmation of the exemption granted by Hermogenes, but it could be exemption from the praetorship. I infer from Libanius' vagueness that Julianus himself carried this letter and put his case to Themistius in person.

nor would you claim to fear the proverb maintaining that it's folly to help people of no account. 3. Olympius isn't one of *those*; rather, he of all people is good at remembering a favour, at watching for the right moment to pay it back and at being eager to return it more lavishly. So let this be done now, even if it wasn't before. 4. You have two instructors concerning these matters: that letter¹⁰⁰ in which I explained who his people were and how you acquired the man, and I've explained both how he's being wronged and what you ought to do to prevent it. 5. Even if you no longer have the letter nor a recollection of what was in it, you have Olympius' brother,¹⁰¹ from whom you'll learn the details and make justice strong.

84. TO THEMISTIUS

(Sent to Constantinople, winter 360/1) F252 W255

1. If you're willing to judge Olympius the best of men, you'll be thinking correctly, but if you should class him among the rich, your views won't be in touch with reality. The Romans understood this and enrolled him among themselves, but let him off with tax immunity.¹⁰² 2. I'm not reporting this so that immunity will be granted to him by you as well, since your City hasn't yet been schooled in such practices – though it ought to be that way in the city where you live and play a political role – rather I'm saying that it's just that the man who paid nothing there ought not to be paying more among you than his resources warrant. 3. But he's being forced not only to pay more than his resources, he's also being forced to pay the tax another man owes, since that fellow too is called Olympius, on account of whom this Olympius is being tormented.¹⁰³ 4. Mantitheus' fear wasn't idle, I guess, nor did he waste his words on a trivial matter, if this Olympius, even though he's not from the same father, suffers trouble because he has an identical name.¹⁰⁴ 5. They're claiming that as a liturgist as well he has paid the highest level of expenditure, but he couldn't undertake either this level or what you think of as the second level, and I would claim that he couldn't even undertake the

100 *Ep.* 70/N43.

101 His older brother, Miccalus.

102 Exemption from the *foliis*.

103 Cf. B66.6.

104 A clever *a fortiori* argument. In Demosthenes' *Or.* 39, two men are enrolled on the deme's register as Mantitheus. They have the same father, but different mothers, and one is trying to impersonate the other for financial advantage. Olympius' situation is worse, since he doesn't even have the same father as the second Olympius.

third level without strain, and that will be the case, if anyone ever summons him in accordance with the law.¹⁰⁵ 6. But that will be later in time, since the emperor has granted a deferral¹⁰⁶ to those whom you've enrolled from the 'mother' – so you call Rome and rightly so. If anyone deprives Olympius of this deferral, consider it unbearable. Neither could you say that he doesn't know how to be a friend, and it's proper to help him because he does.

85. TO THEMISTIUS

(Sent to Constantinople, winter 362/3) F793 W703

Themistius and Libanius generally had excellent relations, despite differences in temperament and political outlook (cf. the tone of *ep.* 62/N52). Only one letter hints at a potentially serious misunderstanding, and it is probably not by chance that it falls in Julian's reign. The philosophical tradition had long debated the respective merits of the active versus the contemplative life and whether a philosopher should engage in politics. Politically influential philosophers invariably drew criticism that their conduct was inappropriate to philosophy. Throughout his career, Themistius had to defend himself against detractors who charged that he was not a true philosopher, merely a sophist, and under Julian, he found himself implicated in the 'misgovernment' of Constantius II. B85 attests to a difficult moment in which Themistius has responded sharply to a disparaging remark allegedly made by Libanius and reported to him by Libanius' cousin Spectatus 1. Libanius reassures Themistius that he has always believed and still does that Themistius 'lives as a philosopher' and that, although he may be writing more now that he is no longer engaged in the active life, it was even more impressive when he successfully engaged in high politics without compromising philosophy. Libanius graciously praises the active life and the superior achievement of a philosopher who remains true to philosophy while engaging in politics. On Themistius' detractors, see Vanderspoel (1995), 230–40; Heather and Moncur (2001), 101–07, 286–95.

1. I didn't look on Spectatus as having wronged me, since I wouldn't write about you anything of a sort I would wish covered up, and if I did make some small mistake, I certainly didn't deserve a punishment as great as the one you inflicted when you wrote to me. You inform me about your own character as if I were someone who hadn't been able to learn about it over such a

105 It is said that Olympius already performed the most expensive of the three versions of the quaestorship, the liturgy conferring entrance to the senate at Rome. Libanius doesn't deny the claim, but asserts that Olympius couldn't handle even the third class liturgy at Constantinople without trouble. The Roman liturgies involved greater expense than those in the East.

106 Cf. B66.10.

long span of time – twelve years, I believe.¹⁰⁷ 2. Yet, not only would one of the slaves raised in your household not have undergone that, not even that well-known Istrus,¹⁰⁸ the barbarian one, would have suffered it. However, you were eager, it seems, to show that the man who has, if nothing else, frequently gone to the public baths with you was more worthless than Melitides.¹⁰⁹ 3. For my part, I firmly believe both now and for a long time since that you live as a philosopher, and although you're perhaps writing more at present, even before you maintained a conduct appropriate to that way of life, and *that* touchstone of authenticity was surely greater than the present one.¹¹⁰ For a man to stand apart from practical affairs and to abide by Plato's *Laws* is not the same thing as a man not being dictated to at all, despite the many people pestering him. 4. In counting many men as your pupils,¹¹¹ you're saying that many men are fortunate: it's possible for them to receive the Truth and with it to advance towards eloquence. Certainly, for you Plato's works involve both teaching noble things and teaching them with an eloquent tongue.¹¹² Neither am I unaware nor am I silent about these matters. On the contrary, whoever came to speak with me departed having heard sentiments of that kind. 5. So stop writing those sorts of letters and believe that I may have grown older, but I've not yet lost my wits.

107 Libanius had moved from Nicomedia to Constantinople in 350.

108 A slave in a comedy of Menander, cf. Suidas, *Lexicon* I.706.

109 A proverbial blockhead, cited occasionally in the letters, e.g. 51, 703, 1350; cf. Aristophanes, *Frogs* 991.

110 Libanius contrasts Themistius' 'contemplative' life now to his 'active' life when he was vital to expansion of the senate in 358–59. Themistius' *Oration* 21 from 355 or 356 is entitled 'The Touchstone or The Philosopher'.

111 An echo of the charge that he was no philosopher because he had no philosophical circle.

112 Libanius makes a virtue of the charge others lodged against Themistius that he was a sophist, not a philosopher.

IV. LETTERS TO PROVINCIAL GOVERNORS

86. TO ANDRONICUS

(Sent to Constantinople, spring 355) F399 W401

B86–88 and 90–93 are addressed to Andronicus 3, an admired former pupil of Libanius with influence in Constantinople in 356, perhaps as a senator (Petit, *FOL* 41). He was governor of Phoenicia in 360–61 and thereafter settled in Tyre. He did not serve under Julian, but was appointed governor of Bithynia and *vicarius* of Thrace during the revolt of Procopius in 365–66. He claimed to have acted under duress, but his plea was rejected and he was executed, allegedly due to the treachery of Hierius 4, whom Libanius had introduced to him (*Or.* 1.171). Between 355 and 364 Libanius sent him 39 letters, of which half are letters of recommendation sent during his governorship of Phoenicia in 360–61. There is a splendid eulogy of his character and political abilities at *Or.* 62.56–59, translated in Norman (2000), 104–05.

B86 was written in the spring of 355 when Libanius was fighting off the order to return to his teaching post in Constantinople. It is an exception to the convention that a letter should focus on a single subject. Libanius jumps about from topic to topic, responding in §§1–4 to various complaints and jests as well as mocking life in the capital; in §6 he protests against Andronicus' attempts to bring about his return to Constantinople, and in §§6–7 he encourages Andronicus to break off all relations with a certain Cleomenes.

1. What sort of 'yokels'¹ have you been consorting with that you dismiss the art of rhetoric? For that's certainly not Andronicus' way, everywhere praising long letters and spurning short ones; to the contrary, you well know that there's a place for each and that both are fine in the right circumstance. 2. Fastening on the brevity of my letter, you immediately made that the pretext for another accusation – you're a slanderer in both cases! In attacking my letter for its length, you concocted in your wrath another charge, some leather satchel,² I guess, that wasn't returned. 3. In my view, you've become

1 Literally 'Boeotians', proverbial for rusticity.

2 Διφθέρα, literally, 'leather hide', used by Libanius of a leather pouch or satchel in which papyrus rolls, whether letters or books, were carried by travellers and schoolboys. It might be a

such a remarkable ‘faker’ because you live in a city teeming with fakes! Although our city is perhaps smaller than yours, it doesn’t instil *small-mindedness*! Nor, good sir, are we at such a low ebb that we have leisure to contemplate that ‘so-and-so’ borrowed something and still has it. 4. Now, don’t mock the sophists there – they have what sophists ought to have: huge houses, lots of students, broad bellies and skill in servility! Self-abasement is important for achieving happiness there and the more slavish a man is, the more persuasive he is!³ 5. You presume that you’re acting like a friend towards me, but rest assured that you’re acting like an enemy. You’re working at how I might return to you, and if you’re eager for this and you’re unaware of the circumstances I happen to be in, perhaps your ignorance shows that you’re not a friend. But if you’re dragging me from peace and quiet back into the storm, though you understand how much peace I’ve achieved after such a storm, you’re no Theseus to my Pirithous!⁴ 6. In that case, I’ll be likely to blame you though a friend, but praise the official⁵ though no friend. His attitude is that of an enemy, but his action that of a benefactor. He hinders me from coming, first of all, gratifying me in that I don’t see Cleomenes. 7. If you’re still consorting with *him*, don’t deceive me about it, but if you aren’t consorting with him, what is likely to have been wrong with you that you loved that very fellow you were meant to avoid and, furthermore, did so though you would be likely to distress someone else, a gentleman both prudent and very powerful?⁶ 8. My dearest Andronicus, cease your intimacy with that dog, if you haven’t done so, and stop trying to shift me from here. Take good counsel concerning the business with your uncle, releasing me from a service of that sort. I see that things are calming down a bit.

parchment envelope and an attractive object in its own right (*ep.* 990/N173, 1066.1/N190), or it might be a sturdy bookbag capable of holding many papyrus rolls (*ep.* 1203.2/B167) and thus a heavy weapon in after-school fights (*Or.* 58.5).

3 Libanius loathed Constantinople, cf. *Or.* 1.48, 75–76, 279; *ep.* 731/N87.

4 The Athenian hero Theseus was proverbial for friendship and loyalty. He even descended into the Underworld with Pirithous, who intended to abduct Persephone. Theseus is also alluded to in B25.7, 34.1, 36.4.

5 The official is unidentifiable.

6 Andronicus’ uncle, Strategius Musonianus, who was hostile towards Cleomenes. Cf. B54.

87. TO ANDRONICUS

(Carried by Majorinus to Constantinople, spring 357) F560 W474

B87 is a model letter of reference for Majorinus, a former pupil of a sophistic rival. He has earned Libanius' gratitude by devotion to himself and his circle, despite strong pressures to maintain allegiance to his original teacher.

1. It's fitting that an account reach you of the activities which this Majorinus⁷ has carried out on my behalf, for you take care to miss no detail of my affairs and nothing prevents his conduct towards me, conduct which might contribute to his reputation, from being described by me as well. 2. He was born from people of distinction – his father occupied the highest office⁸ – and he pursued his education with no mean sophist.⁹ When I arrived and delivered a declamation, he was immediately captivated and though he didn't dishonour the other, he admired me, introduced himself and spent time with me, loving, praising and contributing to the edification of my flock, and in everything he did and said, he showed himself not at all inferior to those of you who chose my course and, in fact, better than many who are here now. 3. When some criticised him for preferring someone who was not his teacher to his real teacher, he replied, 'Do you think it's honourable to value what is worse more than what is better?' With arguments of that sort he opposed them and with the remark that they did him wrong to prevent him, as they say, from 'eating of the choice morsels'.¹⁰ 4. The lad is thoroughly good, not quick to anger, reliable in friendship, and he knows how to diminish his possessions in order to help friends. To remedy a misfortune among his companions, he will part with so much that a man might be rich by it – not, as they say, a mere 'olive leaf'.¹¹ Thoughtful when thoughtfulness is called for, he nonetheless doesn't avoid what delights the mind. Whoever should consort with him – even a little – is captivated by the gentleness and grace of his character. 5. Let him get acquainted with the right sort of people there through you, and in addition to meeting them, let him acquire them as friends. Don't be suspicious that he has shared the journey with people who are no friends of mine. It happened by necessity, and though he has shared their carriage, he

⁷ Otherwise unknown.

⁸ The consulship.

⁹ Probably Libanius' rival, Acacius 6, who taught in Antioch until 361.

¹⁰ The entrails spitted, roasted and eaten by the inner circle of participants at a Greek sacrifice, cf. *Iliad* 1.464–65, Aristophanes, *Wealth* 1130.

¹¹ The 'olive leaf' is here an image of worthlessness, but the saying is not attested outside Libanius, cf. *Declamation* 33.37.

doesn't share their views.¹² Test his eloquence and you'll say that I haven't been deceived.

88. TO ANDRONICUS

(Carried by Auxentius to Phoenicia, ?360) F156 W156

B88–91 illustrate the exchange of favours and courtesies expected between governors. In B88, Libanius requests that Andronicus, governor of Phoenicia in 360–61, furnish Auxentius v, a young man passing through Tyre on his way home to Palestina Prima, with a letter of introduction to Hypatius 1, governor of Palestine. Auxentius was carrying *ep.* 157 as a letter of introduction from Libanius to Hypatius, but he wanted a letter from Andronicus as well, since he was the governor of Phoenicia, which happened to be Hypatius' native province.

1. Although this Auxentius¹³ is not a pupil of mine, he has far more goodwill towards me than many of my pupils – he has grieved with me in worse times and shared my pleasure in better times. 2. You know that I said, pointing the lad out to you when you were leaving us, that he would soon be arriving in Phoenicia and that I thought that he ought to be considered one of your friends, and you nodded in assent. 3. He has arrived, so fulfil your promises by looking kindly upon his presence and dispatching him with your own letter. Now, if he were a Phoenician, we would ask you for action, but since he's from the neighbouring province, you yourself request action from the good Hypatius in a letter.

89. TO HYPATIUS

(Sent to Palestina Prima, ?360) F158 W158

B89 reveals that Hypatius 1, governor of Palestina Prima, has been involved in some legal dispute involving property at home in Tyre and has complained to Libanius that Andronicus as governor of Phoenicia has paid scant attention to his interests. He had requested Libanius' intervention. The latter responds that Naumachius (otherwise unknown) had easily resolved the matter and he seeks to reassure Hypatius of Andronicus' esteem. Nonetheless, he promises to write.

1. You suppose that Andronicus is unaware of your virtue or that he doesn't count it a gain for himself if he should protect your interests. But it isn't that

¹² The allusion may be to rivals of the faction headed by Libanius' uncle Phasganius. They backed Libanius' sophistic rival, Acacius 6, who was apparently Majorinus' first teacher.

¹³ Auxentius v, a Palestinian mentioned in *ep.* 156–57.

way. To the contrary, your renown has reached there as well and he knows how to admire good governors. But, nonetheless, since you urge me, I'm writing to him (though he's in no need of a letter) so as not to seem to disobey you, *not* to spur him on. The noble Naumachius (a friend of yours must be such!) accomplished everything, none of it through me, since his own powers sufficed. Since I wasn't summoned for action, I did what remained: I rejoiced at what had been done.

90. TO ANDRONICUS

(Sent to Phoenicia, ?360) F159 W159

B90 is his mild rebuke to Andronicus for failing to be more attentive to Hypatius' interests.

1. We received a marvellous report about the both of you, Hypatius and yourself, to the effect that you are really and truly what you're called: governors. 2. So we're rejoicing with those who are being saved by you, while you rejoice, as is appropriate, in one another: he, because a man such as you cares for his homeland, and you, because you govern a city which bore a man like him. 3. I was amazed that he entreated my intervention with you for oversight of his own property. If he did this, even though he is doing well, simply to find out that you also do favours for me, then he acted well. But if he hasn't yet had any experience of your goodwill, then I can't imagine why he hasn't been treated well. You ought to believe you owe a reward to a man who is like yourself in the art of governance. For if he honours the same things you do, he is undoubtedly gratifying to you, and you owe a favour to the man who gratifies you. 4. So imagine that you yourself owned property in Palestine and farmed there, and that your affairs were of no concern to him, would we not criticise him – and rightly so? Well, if we should be lazy, this self-same accusation will descend upon us, so let's be seen to grant what we would be asking for in his situation.

91. TO ANDRONICUS

(Sent to Phoenicia, 360) F166 W166

B91 offers a good example of the complexity of the exchange of favours routinely requested by Libanius and his contemporaries. Here he requests that Andronicus intervene on behalf of an unnamed traveller with Cyrillus, Governor of Palestina Salutaris in 360–61. The traveller is a kinsman of Boethus, who helped Libanius

manage his business affairs in Antioch. Boethus' father, also a Boethus, was a cousin of Libanius' teacher Zenobius and lived in Elusa. Libanius intervened through letters to assist the family's interests in both Palestine and Phoenicia (cf. *epp.* 118–19, 420, 532). Here Libanius requests that the traveller be well received by the governor in Elusa so that younger Boethus in Antioch will work all the harder in Libanius' interests. The brevity of the note is an indication of how attenuated the links of friendship have become in this instance.

1. You would easily get a favour from Cyrillus, first, as a friend, and second, as governor at Tyre. So send him a letter for the fellow who gave you this letter. If he meets with anything good in Elusa through me, Boethus, his kinsman, will do better by me in managing my affairs.

92. TO ANDRONICUS

(Carried by Bassus to Phoenicia, 360) F175 W175

In B92 we meet Bassus ii, known only from this letter and *ep.* 693. A poor boy from Damascus, Bassus has studied hard and now hopes to deliver his first panegyric before the governor of his native province. Andronicus is requested as a man of *paideia* to fill Bassus' empty purse so that other poor decurions will see that the study of rhetoric repays the effort.

1. I'll select something from Demosthenes to tell you about this Bassus. Andronicus, 'he's a poor man, but certainly not a bad one'.¹⁴ 2. Moreover, he's a Phoenician, has undergone many labours, and now stands before you bearing his speech and an empty purse, so that he might speak the one and fill the other. 3. Both are fitting for you, to receive the one and to fill the other – since it's small. Even a little is a lot for him, so you won't distress the taxpayers and you'll raise him up when he receives it. 4. He's come to me from Damascus penniless, eager for eloquence, and on hearing Aeschylus' remark that in mortals virtues are born from toils,¹⁵ he put aside sleep, considered the pleasures of the theatre harmful and sweating over his books more pleasant than carousing. Not driven to do anything either base or shameful through poverty, he's achieved enough skill that he now has something to say too about your virtues, perhaps nothing quite commensurate with them, but nonetheless he has something of a sort one might praise. 5. But you, granting the favour for Damascus and for me, and much more for the god

¹⁴ *Oration* 21.95.

¹⁵ Aeschylus, *fragment* 340; cf. *ep.* 699.

who imparts eloquence,¹⁶ and considering that your own governorship arises from eloquence, send Bassus back to us with a better suit of clothes and a more cheerful expression, and through one and the same action, assist him and encourage others towards eloquence.

93. TO ANDRONICUS

(Carried by Marius to Phoenicia, 363) F1460 W1495

Marius 1 is travelling to Phoenicia to replace Gaianus 6 as governor. He has requested a letter of introduction to Andronicus as a former governor and an influential resident of Tyre, the provincial capital.

1. I said to the governor that Andronicus was a friend of mine, and he said ‘Well, why don’t you write to Andronicus?’ So I’m obeying and writing, and I maintain to you and all the Phoenicians that you have what’s best from Antioch. If anyone should ask the city what it’s particularly proud of, it would dismiss its great territory and population, its size and springs, and it would say that it bore and nurtured Marius! 2. See to it that you return him to us as quickly as possible, for his own dear sake, since even if he could set things right in the whole world, he needs rest due to his constitution. But it would be in the hands of the gods who possess your land to do such as serves my desire.

94. TO ALEXANDER

(Spring 363) F838 W758

B94–98 concern the governorship of Alexander 5, the ‘hot-headed and savage’ governor of Syria (363) appointed by the departing Julian, in whose view ‘he did not merit the post, but he was a fit governor for the greedy, rebellious Antiochenes’ (Ammianus 23.2.3). Sure of the emperor’s backing, Alexander set about the pagan revival and reform of the city councils with uncompromising zeal and was often in conflict with the councils and his own staff. He favoured Libanius very highly, however, consulting him for advice and procuring students for him. In his last letter to Julian (*ep.* 811/N100), Libanius confessed that he had considered the choice of Alexander disastrous, but the man’s severity had in fact produced positive results. B94, the first in the series to Alexander, illustrates the problem Libanius faced in dealing with this heavy-handed governor. He labours to show gratitude for the honours showered on him, but encourages Alexander not to disparage other teachers or to bully fathers into sending their sons to Libanius’ school. If he wishes to advance

¹⁶ Hermes.

Libanius' interests, he has merely to assign court cases to Libanius' former students. Syrian parents will know how to react.

1. If Midas were alive today and ruled the Phrygians and this Midas had as much gold as the story says,¹⁷ do you suppose I'd choose him rather than the honours from you, which are so numerous, of an importance surpassing their number, and conferring more pleasure on the honourer than on the one honoured? 2. You know that I often hesitated to ask a favour, contemplating how many I was receiving, but you discovered in my face the reaction of my soul, and you were critical if I should believe that you would ever tire of gratifying me. 3. The account of these matters has already circulated to the boundaries of the empire, and everyone sings aloud that neither could a son have been so solicitous towards his father, nor a father towards his son. 4. It would certainly be a long story and, they say, one for an 'Arabian flute-player',¹⁸ to recount all the fears and dangers from which you freed my fellow-citizens through *me*, declaring that if they should make requests of you through anyone else, they would be wasting their breath, and how you settled the affairs of our Council in such a way as to honour me and you both with the same acclamations. 5. But knowing that nothing could ever confer more distinction on a sophist than if he should be inundated with pupils, there's nothing that you don't set in motion, by which you think that you'll strip teachers residing elsewhere of pupils and that you'll lure here students scattered throughout all Syria.¹⁹ 6. Indeed, I can easily suggest how this might come about. Accept that there are many schools and don't find fault with sophists or criticise fathers, but seek out the youths whom you recently enrolled among the advocates, summon them and put them on display as speakers. 7. It's a big deal for such fellows that the judge say, 'Where is so-and-so?' – these little words produce a crowd of people fleeing for protection to the man judged worthy of them. And whoever's students seem to have the power to help them, everyone runs to *that* man in their desire for influence. 8. We hear that many governors created the fame of many men who had been unknown and who acquired a name for themselves. Even now they

17 King Midas prayed that everything he touched be turned to gold. His prayer was answered, but when even his food and drink turned to gold, he realised the folly of his desires. The story is best known from Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 11.90ff.

18 An expression used of a long-winded chatterbox. It derives from Menander, frag. 32, 871.

19 Literally 'you will strip those residing elsewhere and you will draw here those scattered throughout all Syria'. At *ep.* 405.12/N6 Libanius' rival, Acacius 6, fears he may be 'stripped' of his pupils.

point to the good advocates and say among themselves, ‘Rufinus²⁰ wanted this fellow, Himerius²¹ that fellow, someone else that other fellow.’ 9. If the man who knows how to speak lacks an opportunity for speaking, how will it be clear that he knows how to speak? Opportunities came about for those who are older through the passing of time, but for those who have just tasted the speaker’s platform, the opportunities must come from you. 10. Take this path, loftiest of all men, and you’ll see more of those whom you desire around your Orpheus!²²

95. TO MARCELLINUS

(Sent to Apamea, April/May 363) F1357 W1421b

Alexander’s tough policy against those seeking to evade curial duties led to widespread fear and a mass of litigation as men sought to evade this unwanted fate. In April/May 363 he visited Apamea to investigate the council and the financial condition of the city. Although the visit was much dreaded by the city, it turned out well. *Epp.* 1351/N104, 1389–90 and 1392/B97 all concern the visit. In the current letter, Libanius writes to Marcellinus, father of a former pupil, who fears that the implacable Alexander will saddle him with an unwelcome curial duty. Libanius reassures Marcellinus that he will secure the exemption he desires. After the visit, Libanius received enthusiastic letters from the Apameans Eustolius and Sopater 2, praising Alexander’s conduct, letters which Libanius took care to pass under the governor’s eyes, cf. *epp.* 1389–90.

1. The governor heard about you what it was suitable to hear from me, and if ever he sees your physical condition, there’s no way that he’ll not let you off. I hope that in other respects he’ll be very kind to you, or rather, if he does shows a harsh side, he’ll eventually soften. He’s incensed about the situation, but he’ll become reconciled due to his nature.²³ 2. So send him on his way, loving him but not without fearing him – he’s inspired both sentiments in me. The boys from whom you’ll take this letter are my handiwork: they know how to speak, but you’ll see that they need help as if they were still at

20 Aradius Rufinus 11, *comes Orientis* in 363–64.

21 Unknown office holder.

22 Orpheus, the famous musician whose music made rocks and trees dance, and whose song persuaded Hades and Persephone to allow his wife Eurydice to return to the upper world, provided that he led her to the realm of light without looking back. Their tale is best known from Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 10.1ff.

23 Like the Emperor Julian, Alexander was in conflict with the council of Antioch over the famine afflicting Syria and the desirability of price controls on grain.

the starting gate. 3. You more than others ought to be seen helping them, when you contemplate your son's situation, as he was their 'tent-mate'. But the lad too should think about how to help members of his own chorus. Never will he grant me a greater reward than that!

96. TO ALEXANDER

(Spring 363) F1360 W1424

The scene described in B96 illustrates vividly the popular perception of Libanius' influence under Julian. *Ep.* 701/N82 to Julianus 12 also mentions the multitude now requesting his assistance.

1. Even though you departed from us, you couldn't escape my importuning, since neither have I myself been able to find any rest! Today, at any rate, when I was returning from my usual pursuits and had reached the front door, I was hunted down by a youth and two old women. 2. The three of them set up a lament, falling at my knees and begging me to help them in their orphanhood and poverty. I stood there, listened, shed tears, and gave them a letter at their request, believing that it was right for me to encourage you to put a stop to those who have been wronging them for a long time through influence. 3. So, in loathing for the man who has fended off their lawsuit for ten years and in pity for these people who haven't been able to get justice, make it clear that what was previously possible is forbidden.

97. TO ALEXANDER

(Sent to Tarsus, spring 363) F1392 W1450

In the absence of the *comes Orientis*, Rufinus 11, on campaign with the emperor, Alexander appears to have exercised the authority of the *comes* as well as that of the *consularis Syriae*, since we find him intervening not only in Apamea, but also in Tarsus, headquarters of the governor of Cilicia and the intended imperial seat after completion of the campaign against Persia. In B97 Libanius intervenes on behalf of Auxentius 5, a *principalis* of Tarsus. Alexander intends to appoint him *syndikos* or *defensor* in Tarsus, a post involving adjudication and arbitration of civil lawsuits. According to Libanius, however, Auxentius would be much better suited to oversight of temple repairs or similar building projects. This Auxentius is judged 'probably identical' (*PLRE* 142) to the Auxentius who was both an architect and governor of Cilicia (before 384). He was responsible for three known construction projects: two bridges, one at Adana in Cilicia and one at Rome, as well as repairs to a temple of Diana at Rome. Alternatively, we may have two men of different generations from a

prominent Cilician family with a strong interest in architecture and construction. References at *PLRE* 142 (5), *FOL* 52 (ii).

1. When you arrived in Apamea, you found a letter of mine on behalf of the city, or, if you will, on your behalf, for the same letter brought salvation to it and fame to you. Normally, at a governor's approach, men flee to the mountain-tops, while others endure beatings, fetters and everything conceivable, rather than pay their required taxes,²⁴ but you made an appearance and reformed the city – some people brought in their contributions, others sang, while still others danced. No one fled, nor was anyone beaten, nor anyone put in chains. 2. Through enchantments of that sort, you showed that fierce, difficult city that had perpetrated and suffered virtually everything, to be gentle, tractable and easy to govern.²⁵ This was indeed a novelty: a governor departed Apamea loving and being loved, bestowing praise and receiving applause! 3. Now, in the city by the sea²⁶ you found a letter offering no advice about the city, since they don't have much territory,²⁷ their character isn't stubborn, and a nod would be sufficient to get everything done. Furthermore, the festival of the god²⁸ would be better able than a letter from me to calm your anger, if anger should descend on you from any quarter. So the Pythian god²⁹ will speak to you about the city, but as for the friendship between Auxentius and myself, though you know about it, listen again now. 4. This man is so far superior to money, that from small private means he has passed through every civic duty, and what's more, he's performed the greater ones twice. Although he was forever spending, he supposed he was gaining, since he was convinced that a good name was finer than gold. So well does he understand how to be a friend, you'd call him a pupil of Theseus!³⁰

24 On the travails of governors and provincials over the collection of taxes, see Brown (1992), 25–29.

25 Apamea's intractability was probably due to the local aristocracy's lack of cooperation with imperial officials concerning tax collection, but religion may have played a role. Apamea was staunchly pagan, cf. *ep.* 1351/N104, implying sacrifices even after they had been made illegal. It was precisely this loyalty to the old gods and to the memory of the philosopher Iamblichus that made Julian favour Apamea in its dispute for precedence with Laodicea, cf. Libanius, *Or.* 18.187.

26 Tarsus in Cilicia.

27 Tarsus' territory was small in comparison with that of Apamea, but both cities were surrounded by very fertile land.

28 Apollo. On Tarsus' festivals, see Jones (1937), 208.

29 Apollo at Delphi.

30 For Theseus as a perfect friend, see note on B25.7.

5. Perceiving such things, I counted it a gain to have him in the chorus of my friends, and I continue to do whatever good thing I can for him. I was able to instruct the governors who he is, and those who saw that he was a good man honoured him with words and deeds that showed honour, and now he is illustrious among his fellow citizens.³¹ 6. But, if you will, let's suppose him a nobody who was utterly neglected up to now – he *ought* to be great and I desire this. I have a good architect of this greatness in Alexander, who is like the gods in the speed with which he raises aloft whomever he wishes. 7. So work on his greatness, not by making Auxentius a *syndikos* (think of those tears at Daphne³²), but by promoting the rebuilding of the temples or some similar project through him, for which you'll find that the man raises up greater things at less expense.

98. TO ALEXANDER

(Sent to Cilicia, Spring 363) F1411 W1057

Libanius had close ties with the Antiochene curial family headed by Asterius, who had two sons, Olympius 9/v and Eusebius 17/xxi, the latter of whom was a teacher of rhetoric. Olympius' son, Eusebius 24, was later a pupil of Libanius and became one of his assistant teachers in the 380s. While holding the post of *peraequator*, which involved adjustment of tax levels on Antiochene landholdings, Olympius committed some fault which infuriated the governor Alexander. Seeck, *BLZG* 224, hypothesised that he had sought to help Christian landholders, but there is no clear evidence. Libanius acknowledged that Olympius had been in the wrong, but counselled clemency (*ep.* 1397), and after Olympius had fallen ill with the work only half-completed, Libanius requested that the tasks be reapportioned among other *curiales* (*ep.* 1412). B98, however, concerns the brother, Eusebius, who, unlike his father and brother, is a Christian and, amid the clamour against Olympius, is accused of undermining the governor's attempts to reinstitute sacrifices at the festivals. To escape arrest, he has sought refuge with Libanius, who states flatly that the accusations are slander and that Eusebius had always conducted himself with discretion. In *ep.* 1414, written very soon after the current letter, we find that Eusebius has been encumbered with a *sitigia*, a curial duty involving supervision of grain shipments to Antioch by sea. Libanius considered the appointment ridiculous in light of Eusebius' poverty, but such appointments were a common form of revenge meted out by angry officials.

31 As a *honoratus*, according to Chastagnol in *FOL* 52.

32 An allusion to Libanius' own role in the legal inquiry into the burning of the Apollo Temple in Daphne in October 362.

1. I should wish you to be zealous about the gods and to lead many men to their worship, but don't be surprised if one of those who has recently sacrificed thinks what he has done is terrible, and once again praises abstinence from sacrifice. In public they obey you when you advise them of the best path and they approach the altars, but at home one's wife, her tears and the night bring about a change of heart and drive them from the altars. 2. The Eusebius who has incurred the charge that, in effect, he was undoing what you had laboured over, has obviously been slandered and is clear of blame. Neither is he unaware of the present atmosphere – he everywhere uses reason rather than daring and he understands your anger – and not even if he were very foolish, could he have tumbled headlong onto the jugglers' swords in this way.³³ 3. He's not one of the undiscerning, who do everything thoughtlessly, but, inasmuch as he has his share of eloquence and took care to be judicious, neither was he harsh nor arrogant when he had the power. You'd say that he knew what was coming, so discreet was he. For that reason, you made the man a friend both to me and to Nicocles,³⁴ because in honouring his own way he didn't dishonour those who took their oath by Zeus. 4. In flight from chains and the soldiers' grasp, this Eusebius has come to me and recounted where he was arriving from. I was happy that a man deserving and innocent hadn't been bound, since you too would have been disheartened, if you knew of him suffering a thing like that – a man of his sort coming to such a pass! 5. So now free the man from fear or demand him from me, since he's at my house. I don't think that I'll be less of a friend than dogs or Admetus!³⁵ 6. I counsel you to chastise Eusebius after the accusation and an investigation have taken place, but not to believe that slanders constitute an investigation. It's abominable that those who are depriving him of a defence need to defend themselves. And if he shouldn't be convicted, then how would his followers be doing wrong? If they're doing no wrong, they'll endure in silence what they've suffered, but let their suffering stop there.

33 An allusion to Plato, *Euthydemus* 294e, where the brothers Euthydemus and Dionysodorus insist that there is nothing that they do not know how to do, including juggle with swords.

34 On Nicocles, see B76.

35 The dog is the old hound, Argos, the first member of Odysseus' household to recognise his master disguised as a beggar (*Odyssey* 17.292). Admetus was a King of Pherae in Thessaly and famed for his hospitable reception of Apollo. Angered that his son Asclepius had been blasted by Zeus' thunderbolt, Apollo killed the Cyclopes who made the thunderbolts. Zeus was ready to hurl Apollo into Tartarus, but at Leto's intercession, commuted the sentence and banished him to serve as herdsman to King Admetus for a year. Admetus received Apollo kindly and was helped by the god in turn to win his bride Alcestis, cf. Euripides, *Alcestis* 1ff.

99. TO ACACIUS

(Carried by Themistius³⁶ to Galatia, 361) F298 W301

B99–103 and 105 are addressed to Acacius 8, governor of Phrygia prior to 361 and governor of Galatia in 361–62. He had trouble in securing a post in the reaction after Julian's death (cf. B46), but was eventually appointed *comes domorum per Cappadociam* in late 363. He earned Libanius' sincere gratitude as governor of Galatia by favouring Maximus, an influential *principalis* of Ancyra and his son Hyperechius, a favourite former pupil. B99, the first of nine written to Acacius between 361 and 365, contains Libanius' initial request to Acacius as the new governor of Galatia to favour the house of Maximus. Simultaneously, Libanius wrote *ep.* 308/N75 requesting that Domitius Modestus, the *comes Orientis*, also intervene with Acacius on behalf of Maximus. B73 reveals that Domitius complied.

1. Come now, shift yourself and do for the Galatians what you did for the Phrygians!³⁷ You led the Phrygians, of course, into utter bliss by your skill at shepherding. Persuaded of these things concerning you, I don't hesitate to broadcast them either. 2. You, on the other hand, had been persuaded of better things concerning me, but you concealed them in silence. I thought you very worthy and I counted you among my own friends even though you seemed to be ranged with my opponents – but you didn't draw your bow.³⁸ The request for a favour now follows from my way of thinking then. I'll ask for many favours after this one, but this one before the rest. 3. There is in Ancyra a Maximus, well born, 'better born than Codrus',³⁹ they say, a gentle man, rich from just means, not one who prays to acquire his neighbour's land, but who prays that he'll acquire much from his own foresight, a man dear to Demeter through his devotion to farming, dear to Artemis through the hunt. Having set aside the armour with which he once arrayed himself,⁴⁰ he raises horses and dogs for the hunt, and appearing seldom in the city square, he harmed no one, rather he gave pleasure by his appearance and went away criticised for the simple fact that he ran away to the countryside.

36 Themistius 2, former student of Libanius who was appointed governor of Lycia at the same period. *Ep.* 621 to Themistius indicates that he never delivered this letter.

37 Acacius had been governor of Phrygia prior to 361 and was newly appointed as governor of Galatia.

38 Acacius had maintained a respectful silence rather than engage in the typically noisy demonstrations against his own teacher's rival.

39 Codrus was a mythical king of Athens. The phrase is also used by Lucian, *Timon* 23.9; *Dialogues of the Dead* 19.4.

40 The 'armour' of the advocate who pleads cases in court.

4. This Maximus has long since become a guest-friend of mine, and he entrusted his sons to me. By demonstrating virtue in his youth, the older of them forged a friendship between me and his own parents by which they put my affairs before their own, and the same thing prevails with me. So rest assured that I consider more a benefactor the man who is zealous on their behalf than whoever chooses dangers on my behalf. 5. I'm confident that now, if ever, the man will be held in honour, since I'm confident that he's not set down by you as a man of no account. In the case of bad governors, a skilful orator's speech is brief, for the governors would wish their affairs to be kept in silence, but in the case of you noble governors, there's need for eloquence, very much so, eloquence by which all time will know the nobility of your deeds.

100. TO ACACIUS

(Sent to Galatia, autumn 361) F651 W565

B100–01 thank Acacius 8 for the high favour shown to the family of Maximus of Ancyra.

1. The wealth of Croesus, the gold of Gyges and, still more, that of Midas the Phrygian,⁴¹ whose land you now benefit and have benefited⁴² (but, I suppose, you'll not excite wonder at the present benefaction to Ancyra, since you are governor and know whence her name comes),⁴³ so if you'd seized all of those treasures from wherever and sent them to me, all those many things wouldn't have been greater than what has now been granted, so much less to me is all that than what has come about for Maximus! 2. But, good sir, see to it that the future is in no way inferior to what has already been done. You'll not be doing a favour for an ungrateful man, rather for a man who raises a shout and broadcasts whatever he received. 3. Neither was he silent with me about his audience with you or what he received on being introduced to you. To the contrary, he's such a fine fellow that he sent a long letter and wove through it a single refrain, so that I was even moved to laughter, for he

41 These three were proverbial for wealth. Herodotus describes their lavish gifts to Apollo at Delphi: 1.14 (Gyges); 1.46–56; 8.35 (Croesus); 1.14 (Midas); cf. Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 10.1ff on Midas.

42 Acacius had governed Phrygia prior to 361.

43 Ancyra means 'anchor' in Greek. Tradition held that King Midas had discovered an anchor on the spot and had founded his city there. The anchor was still on display in the Temple of Zeus in Roman times, cf. Pausanias, *Guide to Greece* 1.4.5.

worked through the whole length of the letter 'I've been honoured!' and 'I was honoured!' and 'I've been worthy of honour!' and the letter was simply a case of 'Zeus' Corinthus!'⁴⁴ 4. Now, if whoever is ungrateful should reasonably be hated, how can one not grant as many favours as possible, like seeds on the rich earth, to the sort of man who takes care to recall a favour? 5. I praised you for not writing anything immediately, though you'd granted the favour. For it was inexplicable that there be no response about what I asked for, and so [I assumed] that you were embarrassed to report what you'd done. But, since you've heard from me about the things done by you for our sake, come now, write, and give us pleasure in every way.

101. TO ACACIUS

(Sent to Galatia, spring 362) F732 W644

In B101 Libanius thanks Acacius for the frequent dinner invitations extended to Maximus' son Hyperechius.

1. Even your first actions were enough for me, those through which you preserved the house of Maximus and judged his son worthy of no mean honours, but like good runners, your second lap is always better.⁴⁵ 2. Although Maximus and Hyperechius wrote me about those things, Philocles⁴⁶ has described all your goodwill toward them, announcing as well that he shared a table with the young man at your house. He claimed that this was a frequent thing and that Hyperechius had recounted it to him. 3. When I heard about the dinners, both after the honour and before the honour, I contemplated that Hyperechius is improving intellectually by your company, for intelligence flows from your mind to those who consort with you, as sleep flows to the onlookers from people yawning.⁴⁷ 4. I'm likely to be afraid of the very things at which I rejoice, for there are no other benefactions I might compare with these benefactions of yours, and yet many opportunities have produced many benefactors for me. 5. So long as I saw that I might be able

44 Proverbial for an idle repetition. During a revolt of the Megarians, the Corinthians tried repeatedly to appeal to their sentimental attachment to Corinthus, mythical founder of both Corinth and Megara. The Megarians grew exasperated at the repetition of 'Corinthus, son of Zeus' and taunted the Corinthians in turn. Cf. Aristophanes, *Frogs* 440; Pindar, *Nemean* 7.106.

45 A proverbial expression, transferred by Libanius from sacrifices to athletics, cf. Plato, *Laws* 4.723d with Norman's note on *ep.* 557.3/N23.

46 Otherwise unknown.

47 An image from Plato, *Charmides* 169c.

to repay you, I was absolutely happy, but since you grant more and greater things than I can repay, now a bit of fear is working its way into me, that I may have to go around as a debtor unable to repay his debt. 6. But the most irrational thing of all is that I wouldn't even prefer this fear to be dispelled; to the contrary, I both fear it and want it to become greater, for I would wish that my dearest friends fare well. 7. But I've discovered some consolation in my difficulties: Acacius is gentle and good, and whether or not he gets the favour returned, he won't put the debtor to the test, broadcasting what he has given. No, it'll be enough for him if he has given a favour to a man who is no scoundrel.

102. TO ACACIUS

(Sent to Cappadocia, spring 364) F1174 W1310

Acacius 8 left office at the end of 362 and had trouble securing another post during the reaction after Julian's death. In *ep.* 1449/B46, written in November or December 363, Libanius appealed to Caesarius 1 to help Acacius find a post in order to silence the detractors of the Hellenes. At the year's end, Acacius was apparently appointed *comes domorum per Cappadociam*, whose task was to supervise Cappadocia's imperial estates, consisting mostly of vast horse ranches. Many of the horses that raced in the hippodrome at Constantinople came from these ranches. Acacius was clearly disappointed with his office and received this letter of encouragement from Libanius.

Although Acacius had been the pupil of a rival sophist, he had admired Libanius' declamations and he sent his son Marcus to study with Libanius in 362 or 363. However, the boy had studied only briefly with him before being withdrawn from school to travel with an unnamed uncle. B102.5 alludes to this departure; B103 helps clarify the reasons for it.

1. You seem to me to have forgotten your Homer and Euripides, and that's why you're irritated at governing horses. If you recalled how Apollo ministered to mortal men,⁴⁸ you wouldn't claim you've been done wrong. Have a look at the 'Catalogue of the Achaeans' and other passages, and you'll find consolation.⁴⁹ 2. In any event, you're not, strictly speaking, governing horses, but the men who oversee the horses. So, even if you're terribly ashamed at the former, but believe the latter to befit you, then you have in your grasp what you've learned to do: you've taken charge of men to reform their ways. 3. All manner of evil has been produced by the overseers of the horses, and

48 Euripides, *Alceste* 1ff. for Apollo's servitude as herdsman to King Admetus.

49 At *Iliad* 2.761 Homer invokes the Muse for a list of the best horses at Troy.

since some of the colts had been ruined through neglect, while others had been stolen and still others destroyed in other ways, you were sent to set the business to rights. For you alone seemed unlikely to go after illicit profits, nor is so important a reason beside the point. Certainly, what seems to me more important than the most important office is the fact that this current position came to you for so noble a reason! 4. I'm absolutely certain that you'll arrive at that office from which, though you came close, you were driven back by envy, and though envy will war against you the next time as well, she won't be able to prevail in the same way. 5. But a god will accomplish these things. Marcus appeared and acquired what gave you pleasure when you learned of it, but I wasn't able to prevent him from flying off with his uncle, who, moreover, didn't tell me beforehand what he was going to do! So let that uncle be questioned about what happened later, but ask me for an account of what was done before the journey.

103. TO ACACIUS

(Sent to Cappadocia, spring 364) F1222 W1211

B103 reveals that Marcus, the son of Acacius 8, had been withdrawn from Libanius' school because the temptations of Antioch had proved too much for him and his father thought he needed more supervision. Instead of coming home, Marcus travelled with an unnamed uncle, probably an imperial official, and then appears to have taken a post in a provincial office (*officium*), where he has worked for a year or two. Libanius counsels Acacius to persuade Marcus to leave his minor post and to go back to school with Palladius 8, a Cappadocian rhetorician. The young man must be made to see that his father's high offices were the result of hard work in acquiring eloquence.

1. Things greatly honoured have come to you, a good wife and a very fine son, to whom I have given a little, though I wanted to give more. He himself was the reason or rather his uncle, or perhaps it was neither of them, but your decision by which he followed his uncle as he travelled over much territory, on the grounds that it wasn't possible for him to exercise self-restraint otherwise. I don't know if he would have become worse in his habits by remaining here, but I do know that he would have been absolutely better with regard to eloquence. 2. Well, even though much time has elapsed, he'll acquire that eloquence now. In Cappadocia there's a great deal of Hermes' skill, endless streams of eloquence, and a teacher who is father to many speakers, namely the noble Palladius, who both assimilated and transmits the greatness of oratory. 3. I beg you, let Marcus train his mind there,

diverting his eyes for a while from the belt of office (I mean his own belt⁵⁰), and let him look instead to your belt⁵¹ and let him reckon with the fact that it is the fruit of eloquence, and, moreover, over and above that belt he himself possesses, the fruit of hereditary eloquence.⁵² If he should contemplate that, he too will be able to look towards his own belt. 4. That's how you'll handle this situation, but if you bought the horse for me, please send it; if you didn't, then write that these horses aren't much better than bronzes,⁵³ so that we can adopt the second best alternative. You mustn't be afraid that I'm being suspicious that you didn't want to do it.⁵⁴ If I hear that it wasn't possible, that will be immediately believed. We ought not to believe that either the gods or those like them can speak falsehoods!

104. TO PHILIPPUS

(Sent to Cappadocia, 364) F1223 W1219

Philippus 3, a former school companion of Libanius, became an orator and epic poet. He had been a correspondent of the Caesar Julian in the 350s and received *ep.* 40 from the emperor in spring 362. He took an active part in the pagan revival, but paid a price afterwards, cf. *ep.* 1425/B154, 1427. He had placed his sons in Libanius' school, but had quickly withdrawn them when the reaction set in after Julian's death. In B104 Libanius encourages friendship between Philippus and Acacius 8, now an imperial official in Cappadocia, and he chides Philippus for having withdrawn his sons so hastily.

1. I was about to sound the same false note, but your letter arrived and, fortunately, prevented me. While I was writing a letter to the remarkable Acacius and on the verge of adding a farewell by hand,⁵⁵ someone arrived and put

50 The wide leather belt (ζώνη) with ornamental buckles worn by soldiers and civilian imperial officials to indicate office and rank. A potent status-symbol, the 'belt of office made street, fortress and city tremble' (*Or.* 18.134). Marcus, however, is very young and appears to hold some minor official post. His belt is consequently unimposing.

51 Acacius 8 has been governor (*consularis*) of Bithynia and is thus a *vir clarissimus*, which accords him senatorial rank. His current post also makes him a *comes*.

52 'Hereditary' implies that Marcus needs to observe the family tradition of acquiring eloquence.

53 Perhaps a joke on the fact that bronze horses can't run.

54 B105 reveals why Acacius had not purchased a horse for Libanius.

55 Libanius appears to have dictated his letters and occasionally added a farewell salutation in his own hand. In the present instance, he was intending to chide Acacius 8 for failing to show favour to Philippus when Philippus' letter arrived describing his cordial meeting with Acacius.

your letter in my hands. So I deferred his while I wrote this one to you, rejoicing with you both, with him because he has you as a witness to the virtue in his administration, and with you because you have him as a witness to the virtue in your poetry. Clearly, the cricket must sing,⁵⁶ either performing something from the old songs or fashioning something new. 2. You've a sufficient incentive for song in the noble Acacius, who even now isn't concerned with trivial affairs, but who, in a little while, will preside over affairs of the greatest importance.⁵⁷ I'm not speaking as Helenus, 'finest of seers',⁵⁸ but as a man looking at the future from rational calculation. His nobility doesn't go unnoticed and emperors know how to put such men in charge of affairs. 3. Anyone would marvel at you when you claim that you've been wronged in not having received a letter, and when you presume, after bringing your sons to me and immediately taking them away again, that you're not doing wrong: first, to your sons, then to yourself. You can assume that I'm pained at being unable to demonstrate my affection for you in them. 4. Nonetheless, summer is approaching and, through the will of the gods, the city stood by me and that season of fear has passed, having brought to pass none of the things we expected.⁵⁹ You assume that you'll win a reputation of loving your children dearly, but I'm afraid the opposite may occur.

105. TO ACACIUS

(Sent to Cappadocia, 365) F1514 W1106

In B105 Libanius apologises for having asked Acacius 8 to buy a horse for him, being ignorant of the fact that it was illegal for Acacius as an imperial official to purchase horses from the provincials. Next, he requests Acacius' assistance for the sons of Achaeus 2, a son-in-law of Sopater 2, who, like their father, have been summoned to be senators. The father had apparently fended off the summons; the sons too do not wish to be senators, doubtless fearing the financial drain and perhaps the required move to Constantinople.

⁵⁶ Poets and orators had been compared to crickets, proverbial for song, since Homer, cf. *Iliad* 3.151.

⁵⁷ Cf. B103 for allusion to the political post of which Acacius had been deprived through 'envy'.

⁵⁸ *Iliad* 6.76.

⁵⁹ Libanius alleges physical attacks against himself as well as an accusation of treason in the period after Julian's death (*Or.* 1.136–38; *epp.* 1220/N120, 1453).

1. I was silent for a long time out of shame that I'd asked you to do something for me outside the laws. After entreating you to purchase a thoroughbred colt for me, I heard that it was forbidden by law, since it wasn't allowed for an official to make purchases from his subjects. Not wishing to cause me pain, you then covered this up, but I myself was informed by others and blushed as I contemplated the kind of man you'd be when asked for things not your own. 2. Well, pardon me for that, since my life among other pursuits makes me ignorant of such matters. But now I exhort you to protect the sons of Achaeus, whose mother was the daughter of Sopater. They're being dragged off to the Senate, although they're from a father who chose small things rather than great and who wished to guide his homeland rather than be a 'big shot'⁶⁰ around the Bosporus. 3. Keep the boys in the rank to which they are heirs, so that their father's views may prevail and their wealth may be preserved. Their only salvation is to remain where they are. If anything new should befall them, everything's finished. It's enough for me to say, 'Help your friends'. As to how you ought to help, you yourself will decide, since you know such pathways and you have influence as a result of your modest means.⁶¹ All who know your ways respect this and will immediately assist with whatever you approve.

106. TO MAXIMUS

(Sent to Armenia, 361) F656 W570

B106 concerns Carterius of Arce in Armenia, an unusual example of a pupil who became a professor of rhetoric. In 357/8, Libanius had interceded with Eutherius 2, governor of Armenia, for help in deflecting the efforts of the council of Arce from enrolling Carterius, who was with Libanius and had curial exemption because of his profession (*ep.* 245). In B106, written around the death of Constantius in early November 361, Libanius writes to the current governor, Maximus 19, about Carterius' decision to abandon the teaching profession in favour of the army. Maximus, an avid supporter of sophistic pursuits, had probably known Carterius in Antioch and reacted angrily to the news. In response, Libanius expresses discouragement about the decline in the prestige of *paideia* under Constantius, but entreats Maximus not to take any revenge on Carterius or his interests. Furthermore, he points to Maximus' own difficulties in securing a political post as evidence that the partisans of traditional *paideia* are not respected in the current political climate. Who could blame Carterius?

60 Lit. 'walk on air', like Socrates at Aristophanes, *Clouds* 225 and Plato, *Apology* 19c. The same word is used of the courtier Datianus at *ep.* 81.5/N47.

61 Modest means reveal that he is not corrupt, as does his reluctance to purchase a colt for Libanius.

1. By your anger against Carterius, you did what was gratifying to the Muses and all the gods of eloquence, whom he abandoned, and, despite his encounter with them, he has bought weapons, worships Ares and has become a soldier instead of a professor! 2. But, my dear good man, when I look at the present situation, which has raised up their interests and crushed ours (surely, there's instant confirmation of this from your own situation, and I could add from mine as well, since we've been forced to praise people far worse than ourselves, fearing their stupidity along with their power),⁶² in the light of those things and considering that Carterius is likely to have encountered something promoting his advantage, confine your 'favour to Hermes'⁶³ to the past, but as for the future let there be more compassion than criticism, so that I too may be released from blame. You don't seem unmindful of your promises to me, but I *do* seem to have provoked your harsh judgement. 3. Then I'm assailed by suspicions! But do away with all this, show me to be no scoundrel and show yourself to be far removed from lying.⁶⁴

107. TO MAXIMUS

(Sent to Galatia, autumn 362) F779 W689

After serving as governor of Armenia in 361, Maximus 19 succeeded Acacius 8 as governor of Galatia in late 362. B107 describes the arrival in Antioch of Maximus' first letter composed after succeeding Acacius, who had returned to Antioch and handed the letter to Libanius at a gathering in the imperial palace. Libanius here praises the beauty of the letter, which he had read out to the audience assembled in the palace. He then appeals to Maximus as Galatia's new governor to favour the family of Maximus of Ancyra, the prominent decurion on whose behalf he had written B99–101 to Acacius.

1. All your creations are beautiful, starting from their very form, or rather, from their very soul! On this occasion, at any rate, the beauty of your letter gripped me as I listened – itself about beauty and far more brilliant than those which often came from Armenia! 2. The letter-bearer was the man whom you succeeded, a noble fellow who handed down the cities to another noble

62 Libanius refers to the promotion of men without a traditional rhetorical education, particularly men trained in law or in stenography, cf. *Or.* 1.154: 'Moreover, it is also part of my misfortune that I sat giving lessons in rhetoric while rhetoric is sick, disparaged, and reviled and your hopes are pinned on other men....'

63 The righteous anger against Carterius.

64 The allusions at the end of the letter are unclear.

fellow! He gave it to me at the palace, when some poet had gathered an audience to acclaim him. After reading your letter and admiring it, I got in ahead of the poet and used the gathering to read out the letter, and there was no one who could stand to listen in silence! 3. So just as you have surpassed your previous letters from a nearer province by this present letter from a farther province, in that way let this governorship surpass your previous governorship, and make the Galatians more blessed than the Armenians! For my sake, make the house of Maximus⁶⁵ the *most* blessed among the Galatians, honouring his wife's virtue, his own gentle courtesy, and their child, who is to me dearer than all of them. 4. I'd recount the reasons, if I hadn't instructed you in person. As things stand, it was necessary to send an explanation to Acacius in a letter and to go on at length,⁶⁶ since he wasn't aware of all this, but you heard prior to setting out, and it's irksome to tell someone already in the know. 5. Although Acacius and I hadn't previously been friends, we became friends due to his enthusiasm for Hyperechius, and now there isn't any charge Acacius might give me that he'll not find me doing more, for I believe I owe him a lot. But you, good sir, do things that are worthy of our already existing friendship, and make Hyperechius great, distinguished and admired by all, and consider that if you promote him, you'll be raising me aloft!

108. TO MAXIMUS

(Carried by Domitius Modestus to Galatia, 362/3) F791 W701

In late 362 the *comes Orientis* Domitius Modestus was appointed Prefect of Constantinople and journeyed from Antioch to Constantinople via Ancyra, where he delivered letters to the governor, Maximus 19 (*ep.* 791/B108), and Hyperechius (*ep.* 792/B180). B108 makes clear that Modestus' appointment was controversial. His severity as a judge during the treason trials at Scythopolis in 359 had gained him enemies and his apostasy from Christianity to the old religion left him open to charges of opportunism. Julian had heard damning reports prior to his arrival in Antioch, but changed his view after investigating the charges and promoted Modestus. As in the case of other controversial choices, Libanius attributes the emperor's selection to special knowledge gained through prophecy, cf. *Or.* 18.180.

1. If I should call you a pupil of the noble Modestus, I'd be shaming neither of you, for you'll be thought of as a follower of a very powerful man and

⁶⁵ Maximus of Ancyra, discussed in B99–101.

⁶⁶ Libanius had 'instructed' Acacius prior to his setting out to take over the post of governor in 361.

he'll be thought to have fashioned a worthy imitator! 2. These things are indeed sweet to me, but sweeter by far is the fact that the emperor is glorified by the nature of the men selected by him. Nonetheless, there were many who tried to persuade him that Modestus deserved to be put on trial. The emperor listened to them, looked at the facts, and although before arriving here he believed that he was an evil man, he found on arrival that the man towards whom he'd been hostile was a good man. Consequently, he appointed him Prefect and he paid little attention to those who were upset over this, and simultaneously he instructed his long-time associates to practise virtue, indicating that he would expel any of them who turned evil, but if he should see that his enemy's servant was really an honourable man, he wouldn't do this, and in the present case he promoted him to office. 3. That great son of Atreus, the one who led the demigods and who benefited from Homer's art, killed Palamedes, thereby committing deeds that diminished his fame.⁶⁷ But in the present instance the power of Truth resides with the emperor, and Truth herself rules, discovering some things by careful calculation and other things by prophecy. 4. So gather the choruses to escort the governor and count blessed the City that will receive him, and he'll go on his way, counting your Galatians blessed because your good reputation is being broadcast far and wide. May the eye of Zeus watch over the rest of Modestus' affairs and may Zeus carry you through various political offices to the Prefect's throne!

109. TO MAXIMUS

(Sent to Galatia, spring 363) F1350 W1144

B109–10 reveal the vigilance necessary to control slanderous reports about one's conduct both public and private. In spring 363 detractors lodged accusations at court against two governors of Galatia: Ecdicius, governor in 360 and the current governor Maximus 19. The nature of the charges is not revealed, but such circumstances were always tests of friendship. These troubles offered an opportunity to Hyperechius of Ancyra, Libanius' favoured pupil who had failed to secure office under Constantius and who remained stalled even under Julian. In part to assist a brother and in part to curry favour with Maximus, now under a cloud of accusations, Hyperechius travelled to court in spring 363 and made a public display of defending Maximus' conduct in

67 When Odysseus feigned madness to avoid the expedition to Troy, Palamedes exposed the ruse and incurred Odysseus' hatred. He was later falsely accused of treason and put to death on Agamemnon's order. Cf. Apollodorus, *Library*, Epitome 3.8.

Ancyra (*ep.* 808). B109 informs Maximus of this conduct with the aim of enlisting further aid for Hyperechius. Although this letter conveys the impression that Maximus was completely exonerated, we learn from *ep.* 1439 that the ambassadors from Ancyra took pains to defend him before the new emperor Jovian in summer 363.

1. I didn't recount the struggles my companion⁶⁸ has been involved in so that you might become more favourably disposed towards him, for how could a man who had gone through every form of benefaction towards him and his family – overlooking nothing either great or small – how could he increase his goodwill? Rather I wanted you to know, not of course that you've altered from good to bad, no, I recounted all that to demonstrate that Hyperechius knows how to return a favour! 2. He didn't improve your affairs through this favour, since they'd been well handled from the start and remained so and couldn't be changed by slanders, yet nevertheless he gave a fine display of his friendship towards you, choking with rage if anyone dared spread slander. 3. That I myself am one of those who wouldn't hesitate to hurl stones at those who don't respect the truth, you well know. But we no longer need stones. The slander has been cleared away and no longer obscures, like a cloud before the sun's ray, the report of your fine deeds; instead, from all sides the report is the same, that the noble Maximus is the pupil of Rhadamanthus⁶⁹ and that neither by safeguarding the laws is he harming his subjects nor by his kindness towards his subjects is he transgressing the laws. Put simply, when asked how you lead your people everybody arriving from there, replies, 'Well and skilfully'.⁷⁰ 4. This report, corroborated and trusted, spread everywhere through the imperial palace, making the saviour of the empire who is dear to the gods more benevolent towards you.

110. TO MAXIMUS

(Sent to Galatia, spring 363) F1354 W1157

Ecdicius had governed Galatia in 360 as the predecessor of Acacius 8 and was resident in Ancyra, the provincial capital, when he became the target of accusations before the Emperor Julian in 363. B110 thanks Maximus 19 for his steadfast loyalty to Ecdicius, both while Ecdicius was present in Ancyra and while he was away at court to defend himself against his detractors.

⁶⁸ Hyperechius.

⁶⁹ One of the three judges in the Homeric underworld.

⁷⁰ A Homeric phrase, cf. *Iliad* 10.265; *Odyssey* 20.161; 23.197.

1. I feel gratitude towards you, as does the whole city – you may assume that I'm both present in its letter⁷¹ and doing the same thing again privately. Maximus, it's a fine and noble thing you've done and worthy of crowns, in that you observed with respect that man⁷² (himself fine, noble and worthy of crowns!) when he was present and you remained unchanged when he was away.⁷³ 2. The remarkable Ecdicius recounted to me that the prelude to your daily activities was to send a man to inquire of his people how they were doing, whether anything bothered them and how you might help. As he recounted this, he put his hand to his mouth, the very thing done for the gods,⁷⁴ and he seemed frustrated at his own nature in that he didn't have wings to hurry off to see and greet you! 3. Now, I could derive satisfaction from both sides, from your taking action and his being honoured. I love you both, you for your fine reputation through benefactions and him for receiving benefactions. 4. I would say that the emperor too will praise you, if he should learn of these things: he has investigated all matters, reviewed every detail, and he found that a just man had been harmed by accusations that were lies and he undid the decision of the multitude through his own decision. 5. In that he restored honours to Ecdicius, the emperor shared admiration of the fact that you honoured him. We're all publicly enhanced by the honours towards Ecdicius. Demosthenes got it right when he said that whenever an Athenian performs some fine deed for others, the city reaps the fame.⁷⁵ 6. If we enrol you as an Antiochene, since your marriage, wife, house and children persuade us of this, don't be amazed!⁷⁶

71 *Epp.* 267 and 1359 imply that Ecdicius lived in Ancyra, while the formal letter from the council of Antioch implies that he was an Antiochene of high status. Other correspondents pose the same problem, either because they have transferred residence, like Andronicus 3, or have married women from other regions, like the recipient of this letter, Maximus 19, a native of Raphia in Palestine with an Antiochene wife.

72 Ecdicius.

73 In Antioch to defend himself at court, cf. *ep.* 1359.

74 A kiss of the hand is an act of worship among both Greeks and Romans, cf. Lucian, *On Dancing* 17; Apuleius, *Golden Ass* 28.

75 Demosthenes, *Oration* 20.69.

76 During his tours as governor, Maximus' family resided in Antioch, since his wife was Antiochene and owned property there.

111. TO MAXIMUS

(Carried by Encratius to Galatia, summer 363) F1381 W1105

B111 is a typical letter of reference for a certain Encratius, a ‘humble’ decurion in hope of enhancing his status through an audience with the current governor. He has been in Antioch and broadcast praise of Maximus’ administration of Galatia, which Libanius reports to Maximus in order to put Encratius in a favourable light.

1. I had considerable experience of this Encratius in Ancyra,⁷⁷ and more here in Antioch, and he seemed to me both then and now an excellent fellow, the sort of man who could be trusted and befriended. 2. In entering noble houses, he has been responsible for no wrong and many good deeds. As well as recognising the right moment to be serious, he also knows how to amuse and he fills dinner parties with charm. He had heard of your noble deeds and he has come to inform people here, delighting himself and his listeners by his narrative of your actions. 3. Let him get an audience with you and be encouraged by things like this, and let this honour not escape the notice of his fellow citizens. For just as we avoid those in power who are evil, so it is appropriate that we hold firmly to association with people who have no power, but are courteous. In this way, we might also turn many men towards fair play, by demonstrating that gentlemanly conduct is honoured in all circumstances. 4. Encratius asked simultaneously that he himself meet with some esteem from you and that Arion⁷⁸ be freed from the evils engulfing him. So favour Encratius in this way, and may he become great through the favour, so that he’ll feel gratitude towards me for asking that things happen this way, and Arion will feel gratitude towards him since he asked for *this* before anything else.

⁷⁷ I infer that this Encratius is to be distinguished from the Encratius of Palestine known from *ep.* 343.

⁷⁸ Ἀρίων V, Ἀρίων Wolf, Seeck; Ὀρίων Reiske, Foerster. I follow Wolf and Seeck in reading ‘Arion’, a philosopher from Ancyra whose sons studied with Libanius and who received *epp.* 734 and 1165. Unfortunately, neither letter hints at the ‘evils’ said to be engulfing Arion in 363. Petit, *FOL* 185, follows Foerster and reads ‘Orion’ and sees an allusion to the Christian official under attack in Bostra in 363 (B130). Maximus, however, has no known connection to Arabia and as governor of Bithynia, he would have no jurisdiction there.

112. TO CASTRICIUS

(Carried by Maximus 19 to Alexandria, Summer 364) F1230 W1181

In summer 364 Maximus 19 stepped down as governor of Galatia to take up the post of Prefect of Egypt. He carried B112 to Egypt as a letter of introduction addressed to Castrius ii, a teacher of rhetoric.

1. An opportunity has arrived for you with respect to both honour and rhetoric, to demonstrate the latter and obtain the former! For the noble Maximus is the sort of man who races to an oratorical performance and honours good speakers. 2. He demonstrated both these qualities in the great (due to him) and noble city of Midas,⁷⁹ which might also be justly called the city of Maximus. For in addition to buildings, springs and fountains,⁸⁰ he also enhanced it in the area of wisdom by an addition of teachers, rhetorical competitions, and by honouring the victors as well as encouraging the defeated. 3. So employ your tongue for ears that know how to pass judgement, and if any hesitation grips you, put it aside and don't hide your ability. I can also promise you peace concerning the matters now bothering you. Such is the ally Serapis⁸¹ has led to you!

113. TO ALCIMUS

(Carried by Eusebius to Bithynia, 355) F458 W1257

Eusebius 40, brother of Flavius Hypatius and Eusebia, the wife of Constantius II, governed the Hellespont in the early 350s and Bithynia in 355/6 before occupying the consulship with his brother in 359. Both brothers were accused of treason in 371, fined and exiled, but were later recalled and their property restored (Ammianus 29.2.9–13). B113–14 were carried by Eusebius to Nicomedia when he was embarking on his governorship of Bithynia in 355. Alcimus, the addressee of B113, was a teacher of rhetoric and Libanius' closest friend in Nicomedia after Aristaenetus. He had been arrested with Libanius on a trumped-up charge of murder (c. 343/48) and earned Libanius' gratitude for his loyalty in that difficult episode, cf. *Or.* 1.68. He visited Julian's court in Antioch in 362.

79 In legend, King Midas was the founder of Ancyra, the provincial capital of Galatia (see note at B100.1).

80 An allusion to Maximus' building projects in Ancyra while governor.

81 Greco-Egyptian deity combining features of Zeus and Hades, a lord of sky and underworld simultaneously. The Serapeum, his temple in Alexandria, was one of the seven wonders of the world. Libanius regards Serapis as the Egyptian Zeus, cf. B142.

1. Before now I heard someone say that Eusebius is blessed in that he's related to an emperor. Although I hardly regard that as insignificant, it's for the virtue by which he lives that I call him blessed. For how is it not virtue to wish to be good when it is in one's power to become bad? 2. You surely heard how he found the Hellespont and how he left it.⁸² Soon someone else will be singing of your affairs, too. Through everything he has shown me honour and he has graced me with this greatest privilege, that he allows me to write to acquaintances through him. 3. Take this letter and love the man as you do me – and admire him as no other!

114. TO ARISTAENETUS

(Carried by Eusebius to Bithynia, winter 355) F459 W1258

Aristaenetus 1 was Libanius' closest friend in Bithynia and a frequent correspondent. He served as *Vicarius* of the newly created diocese of Pietas in 358 and died in the earthquake that struck Nicomedia on 28 August 358.

1. I asked the worthy Eusebius whether he counted you among his friends. 'Certainly!' he cried out. It was the shout of man revealing what value he placed on friendship. 2. So set aside, at last, your grief for your wife⁸³ and consort with the remarkable man. You need not advise him how to govern, since he has practice in governance (more indeed than anyone I know!) and he employs his grasp of oratory for the salvation of the cities. When you see the ways by which he straightens out civic affairs, see to it that you praise him and make all Bithynia a single chorus of men hymning what they've experienced!

115. TO CLEMATIUS

(Sent to Palestine, 357) F315 W318

Clematius 2 was an imperial courier (*agens in rebus*) from 354 until 357, when he was appointed governor of Palestine through the patronage of Anatolius 3, Prefect of Illyricum (cf. B59). He was a close friend of Libanius and delivered many letters within Libanius' network of friends and contacts while travelling on imperial business. Libanius addressed 14 letters to him during his year as governor. He was learned,

⁸² He was governor of the Hellespont prior to 355.

⁸³ Aristaenetus' wife died in 355. Libanius tried unsuccessfully to console him in numerous letters, cf. *ep.* 405/N6, 414/N8, 427/N9, 430/N11.

keen about sophistic pursuits, and scrupulous in his conduct of official business. B115 offers a good example of the dangerous consequences for a governor who is unduly zealous in his observance of the law.

1. While I was still enjoying your letter, which made known the arrest of a certain thief with an ingenious alibi, the arrival of a crowd at the trial, your flow of eloquence and the applause of the bystanders, while I was delighting in *those* things, the doctor Asclepiades⁸⁴ arrived and plunged me into despair. He claimed that what you had done was the mark of a man deranged, and as he spoke, he persuaded who he persuaded and there was a great hullabaloo. 2. I saw what was happening and restrained the Prefect,⁸⁵ calling the doctor a slanderer and asking the Prefect to conduct an investigation into the matter, and I persuaded Asclepiades not to be a rascal nor stir up trouble. On my side, those who agreed with me and said so were Evagrius⁸⁶ and the man who is most like-minded to us, I mean the excellent Ampelius.⁸⁷ 3. Now this is the Prefect's attitude towards you: the man is neither your enemy nor is he the sort of friend he was before. Although I prevented the former, the latter was achieved by that liar Asclepiades. 4. Now, control your tongue and rein in your talk, since it's better to live with discretion and without fear than to be overbold and tremble. Grant favours to your friends that are just and don't think it noble to resemble the Cyclops and to set up a hue and cry and struggle and despise the gods.⁸⁸ 5. I write these things to you after altering my decision. This change was in writing to you *at all* when you pay no attention to my companions and very dear friends, Eunomus and Eudaemon, both from Elusa.⁸⁹ Yet I spoke to you quite a lot about them and asked that they get something good from you. They're both advocates and make their living from pleading in court. But you delayed in this matter too, namely in summoning them to speak in court, after, I presume, you'd received a report from me about them. 6. Let what has been overlooked by you happen now,

84 Asclepiades 3, known only from this letter.

85 Strategius Musonianus, Prefect of the East 354–58.

86 Possibly to be identified with the imperial courier, Evagrius 3.

87 To be identified with the Ampelius who was governor of Cappadocia before 357 (*ep.* 208), but it is unlikely that this man is Publius Ampelius 3, an Antiochene who was Proconsul of Achaia (359/60), Proconsul of Africa (364) and Prefect of the City of Rome (371–72).

88 The Cyclops Polyphemus despises Zeus and the Olympians at *Odyssey* 9.275–78. Libanius is counselling Clematius not to adopt the 'anti-social' attitude of insisting on a legal punctili-ousness at odds with prevailing norms, particularly if it involves conflict with powerful people.

89 The cousins (cf. *ep.* 164.2) Eunomus 2 and Eudaemon 3, both advocates at Elusa. On Eudaemon, see the introduction to B151; he is mentioned in B69, 128, 158.

so that a letter reaches me not like the present letter I have, for that one is all lamentation.⁹⁰ But if you won't grant these things, then you'll be teaching me no longer to grant the things I'm able to grant!

116. TO CLEMATIUS

(Sent to Palestine, winter 357/8) F332 W335

Libanius routinely praises governors who leave office poorer than when they entered it, except for a few instances in which he expresses frustration with his friends' over-scrupulousness, as he does here to Clematius 2, cf. B63.9.

1. You're getting what you desired: praise, applause, admiration – from the multitude and from those superior to the multitude. You seem not only to vanquish the living, but even those whose reputation is enhanced by the fact that they're no longer living. If anyone mentions Clematius, immediately there follows the 'divine governor', his 'poverty', his 'neglect of wealth', the 'flourishing cities', and all those familiar attributes of yours. 2. But see to it that you're not a 'fasting mullet',⁹¹ and that the applause doesn't consign you to starvation, and, when you're a father and asked by your children for an inheritance, you've nothing except an edifying tale. I say this not to persuade you to become a scoundrel, but since you've decided to leave office empty-handed, it's time for you to consider how, after leaving office, you'll look after your own house.

117. TO CLEMATIUS

(Sent to Palestine, winter 357/8) F354 W357

B117 describes the visit to Clematius 2 of Jovinus 1, a *comes* with influence at court and (possibly) head of one of the imperial financial bureaux. Libanius knew him in his youth in Antioch.

1. Was anyone who happened on gold while digging the soil for something else ever so happy as Jovinus is now at seeing you as governor and as you at receiving him? 2. I call it 'good luck' on your part, but 'virtue' on his, for he made such a long journey to see a friend, while such an important event has come about for you while you sat still! Or rather, his journey points out *your*

⁹⁰ Eunomus and Eudaemon have complained to Libanius that the governor overlooks them.

⁹¹ A vegetarian bottom-feeder, the mullet ate no meat and was thus thought of as 'fasting'.

virtue, since it's appropriate that the good man journey to a like companion! 3. As for the things you'll say and do together, count on it that I can see and hear them, even though absent: the gestures, the jokes, the laughter flowing from you both, the recollection of old times, the reports about the present, the charm of witty stories, and the narrative about me and my affairs, in which you are involved very deeply and from which you can scarcely get away! 4. So let Jovinus be allowed to have his fun, as before, in the house, but if he should bring any of these matters into the city square, exact the penalty from him which you did from me as well, on the grounds that I didn't go along, downcast and trembling, with the man who governs Palestine.⁹²

118. TO PARNASIUS

(Sent to Egypt, winter 357/8) F361 W364

In B118, addressed to Parnasius 1, Prefect of Egypt in 357–59, Libanius requests that the Prefect look kindly on the nephew of Cleobulus 1, an Egyptian poet and teacher resident at Antioch. The nephew is about to enter the Prefect's staff and hopes to enjoy some special favour. What makes the letter interesting is the mention of the imperial courier (*agens in rebus*) Aristophanes in the Prefect's entourage. Parnasius and Aristophanes were both Corinthians and both ran afoul of Constantius II's special investigator Paul the Chain (Paulus Catena 4), who successfully prosecuted them on charges of treason and magic at the Scythopolis trials in 359 (Amm. 19.12.10). Both were fined, banished and only rehabilitated under Julian. Libanius addressed *Oration* 14 to the Emperor Julian on behalf of Aristophanes.

1. I knew that you'd receive my letter with pleasure, as you did my speeches when you were present here. Having persuaded myself of that, I'm not exceeding the bounds of decorum if I should also ask for a favour straight-away. For either I would *need* to pester, believing myself not to be loved, or, confident that I *am* loved, I ought to take heart! The favour is both very easy to give and noble for the giver. 2. So learn of it now. Cleobulus moved here from Egypt. He's a good poet and a teacher like no other, and though he didn't devote himself to many people (he wasn't physically strong), he valued me above others. For this reason Cleobulus is to be honoured by me, and if I ever disobey his injunction, a child has wronged his father! 3. But why do I need to go on about him when you have present at your side someone who knows the man, Aristophanes, distinguished, quite apart from his other qualities, by his desire to consort with you? 4. Well, Cleobulus has a nephew

⁹² The allusion is unclear.

there in Egypt and he's about to be enrolled as one of your subordinates. So register the man on the lists with pleasure and let him receive some fine thing for the sake of his uncle, and by doing this favour, confirm the proverb that 'the Graces are on earth, too'.⁹³

119. TO EUMOLPIUS

(Carried by Parthenius to Constantinople, summer/autumn 359) F75 W73

In summer/autumn 359, the Antiochene decurion Parthenius travelled to court in Constantinople with four letters of recommendation (including B8 and 41) and hopes of an official post. The present letter attempts to mollify Eumolpius, a younger kinsman of Libanius, who had been offended by Parthenius' show of friendship for an enemy. Libanius pleads with Eumolpius to set aside his anger. Ironically, in the 380s Eumolpius offended Libanius by encouraging the study of Latin at Antioch and provoked the sophist to compose an invective against him (*Oration 40, Against Eumolpius*).

1. I'm writing a first letter to you about something noble, if indeed friendship is a noble thing, and I'd wish to persuade you, but my choice wouldn't be a bad thing even if I'm about to fail to persuade you. 2. You became an intimate of Parthenius and the affair proceeded to the point that you two were closer than kinsmen to one another. Some suspicion intervened and severed this bond, since Parthenius seemed to have assisted someone to whom you were hostile. 3. He's innocent of the charge, so he claims, and he swears that he somehow incurred a charge that doesn't apply to him and that he's clear of blame – and I trust him. How is it likely that the man, after having done everything to acquire you as a friend, would deprive himself of what he had? 4. Moreover, even if he has caused you great pain, the punishment he has endured is adequate, and even if it's more pleasant in the short run to exact punishment rather than bear something patiently, it produces more pleasure to be praised for having borne a grievance. It's also true that forgiveness is more Greek than vengeance. 5. Consider too that he'll approach many people and will acknowledge that he desires your friendship, but that you despise him, and they'll take this as a sign of his courtesy and of your contentiousness, as it were. 6. So watch out that you don't, in indulging your anger, lead the majority of people to believe that Parthenius' conduct is reasonable and to censure yours. Rather, believe that such a change of heart befits your nature, respect me as your kinsman and

⁹³ A proverb used of those enjoying great good fortune.

your elder, and consider that private complaint less important than the conduct with which Parthenius openly brought you pleasure. Revert to your state of mind prior to all this ill-will and demonstrate thereby that he hasn't been punished for carrying my single letter rather than many letters.

120. TO PANNYCHIUS

(Sent to Euphratensis, autumn 359) F95 W93–94

B120 is an unusually long letter of introduction for an old schoolmate and close friend, Pelagius 1, a prominent decurion in Cyrrhus north-east of Antioch and governor of Syria in the 380s. He spent much time in Antioch and maintained intimate ties with Libanius' family. The letter illustrates the tight bonds among the principal families of Eastern cities. It is addressed to Pannychius, the new governor of Euphratensis in 359. This letter is our sole source for Pannychius.

1. I blame my preoccupation with the boys for the fact that I was unable to spend time to get to know you here. Perhaps for you as well it wouldn't have been unpleasant to see and converse with me before embarking on your office, but a multitude of anxieties, I suppose, prevented you, anxieties arising from your office and which you had in connection with the Prefect before setting foot in the cities.⁹⁴ 2. Now, it makes sense that those who're upset at not being in another's company adopt the second best course and, if the wind fails, take to the oars and write.⁹⁵ 3. Thus, I expect that I'll find in you a friend, that you'll take pleasure in my letter and that you'll immediately imitate it. Consequently, I don't even hesitate to ask for a favour in a first letter, just as if I'd long been your intimate acquaintance, for I'd be wrong not to *write* what I wouldn't be ashamed to *say* in the present circumstances. 4. That Pelagius is ranked among the foremost men around the Euphrates for his birth and his other distinctions, I think even the Euphrates herself would affirm, if she could speak. Furthermore, he was a fellow student with me and we took pleasure in one another. His was the character more praised – I'll not deny it, believing that it's a fine trait on my part if I should be seen to take pleasure in the character of a man like him. 5. Certainly, there flourished in his presence a kind of courtesy, which all people through whom he travelled have recognised no less than the Syrians, and he travelled through very many

⁹⁴ Euphratensis was a demanding post for a governor in 359 due to strained relations with Persia, leading to war and a Persian invasion. Libanius alludes here to a consultation between the Praetorian Prefect and Pannychius prior to departure for his province.

⁹⁵ A common proverb in Libanius (see note at B37.4).

people when he went on embassy,⁹⁶ creating by his manner a reputation superior to his lineage. Under democracies, it seems to me, he would even have been crowned for his benefactions! 6. But the most important thing is that I'm not conscious of such shrewdness and gentleness having combined in any other person in this way, and yet how can what is calm fail to be slow⁹⁷ to come to a decision? Whereas what is quicker is usually also confused. But *he* has mixed both together and, possessing mental calm with wise counsel, persuaded them to dwell together within him. As a result, he's second to none at discovering what's needed and he's pre-eminent in another respect, namely at recognising, if anyone can, the right moment for speech and silence. He knows how to praise a good governor and how to keep his distance from one who is not of that sort, and he guards his ancestral wealth while not raiding his neighbours' wealth. 7. You yourself could recount this and more to someone else, since the helmsman surely knows the sailor and the chorus-leader the dancers! I know that you'll treat with care this man, who is such a dancer, and thereby do a favour to good men (he's a concern to all good men) and teach your subjects that whoever pursues excellence is preferred by you to those who don't love it. 8. I won't repay your favour with a deed, for deeds aren't my affair, but I won't cease to proclaim what should be said about your deeds. I'll say that your good fortune is deserved in the light of those labours and that eloquence of yours, since you came forth from the groves of the Muses to be a city councillor and you triumphed and proved yourself an orator; and from serving as a councillor you came to a governorship, and Justice sits at your side. 9. We both keep you in mind and pray with you, but you keep in mind your ancestor Minos,⁹⁸ or rather, you'll continue to bear him in mind; as a result of that, crises have been straightened out and it'll be possible for me to say some such thing as I desire about you.

121. TO ATARBIUS

(Carried by Sabinus to court at Constantinople, 359) F83 W81

In the quest for political favours, interventions with an official's legal advisers might be as effective or more effective than requests made directly to the official. B121–22 are attempts to win the goodwill of assessors in a position to influence the verdict in cases involving friends of Libanius. Atarbius had some influence at court in 359,

⁹⁶ Pelagius served as ambassador from Cyrrhus to the Vicennalia celebration for Constantius II in Rome in 357.

⁹⁷ The text is corrupt; I have deleted οὐκ.

⁹⁸ Minos, judge in the underworld, as the 'ancestor' of all men who sit on a judge's throne.

probably as an assessor to a high official. He was later governor of Euphratensis in 362–63 and governor of Macedonia in 364. Here Libanius requests his help for a close friend Sabinus 5, who, as governor of Syria in 358–59, fell afoul of powerful interests, was prosecuted after leaving office and refused to seek another post. The careers of the governors of Syria in the late 350s illustrate the potential perils of office holding. All met with misfortune. Sabinus' predecessor, Nicentius 1, was dismissed, unjustly in Libanius' view, by the Prefect Hermogenes for failing to supply provisions for the army (*ep.* 21/N34). Sabinus' successor, Tryphonianus 2, was prosecuted in 360 for financial misconduct (*ep.* 163/N63).

1. If I were able to share the journey with Sabinus, I would speak with you in person instead of writing, so great is my zeal to rescue the man from the storm. But since I've been compelled by many things to stay here, I haven't passed up the second best alternative and so I'm writing. 2. I should wish you to stand firm for justice's sake and for my own against these difficult circumstances and instruct men that it's not for them to tear governors apart when they leave office. 3. Well, I've promised him that he could get anything from you and that you would be in a position either to prove me a braggart in my promise or not!

122. TO AMMIANUS

(Carried by Calliopius to Euphratensis, 360) F215 W215

Bribery or 'gift giving' to public officials was common in the late empire. Whether there was really more than in earlier periods is debatable, but corruption is certainly a prominent theme in Late Antique sources. Libanius comments frequently on the honesty of Roman officialdom and sets high value on incorruptibility in public officials. B122 was carried by Calliopius 2, a former assessor currently under indictment, to Ammianus 3, himself the assessor of the governor of Euphratensis, Priscianus 1. Calliopius had assumed that a bribe would be required to enlist Ammianus' aid. Cf. *ep.* 554.4.

1. Neither am I doing anything new in requesting a favour of you, and you'll imitate your usual conduct if you should grant the favour, since I've asked for many things and you've granted them.⁹⁹ This Calliopius is both my fellow citizen and someone who has shared my teaching activities here as well as my labours in Thrace.¹⁰⁰ He knows how to go without sleep for his

⁹⁹ This is the first extant letter.

¹⁰⁰ Calliopius 2 was a rhetor and had taught with Libanius both in Antioch and Constantinople.

friends' sake, and it would certainly not be good for me to be inferior to him in that respect. Now if I thought that he was doing wrong, I'd be ashamed for my own sake. As things stand, he's being abused and tormented and I'd be very ashamed if I shouldn't help. 2. I can't assist him through my own influence, but I can through yours, and I'm making use of that in accordance with friendship. So see to it that I judge you more scrupulous than other people. 3. When he was about to depart from here, he mentioned money to me, to the effect that he would win you over that way, for he supposed that the man who is where you now happen to be, does nothing for philanthropy, everything for money.¹⁰¹ I laughed and recounted what I know of you and said, 'Set forth naked and you'll not fault your poverty!' 4. So, noble sir, receive the man in a friendly fashion and put a stop to whichever of the evils you can and demonstrate to me that I've achieved no less than if I were to write to the man in charge of the investigation.

123. TO PRISCIANUS

(Sent to Euphratensis, winter 359/60) F142 W142

A native of Berytus, Priscianus 1 was a schoolmate of Libanius and lifelong friend, practising advocacy in Antioch and sending his son to study with Libanius. Through the patronage of Florentius 3, *magister officiorum*, Priscianus was appointed governor of Euphratensis for 360–61. Libanius showered him with letters, including B123–25, during that period. He did not serve under Julian and appears to have been unhappy about his appointment as governor of Cilicia in late 363, blaming Libanius for some disappointing decision (cf. *epp.* 1118, 1129, 1158).

1. You asked me if I expect you to achieve mastery over your affairs. I expect it. Second, you longed to learn if I consider it likely that you'll get from your present activities a good reputation with men of influence. There's hope of it since what you're doing isn't kept in silence and admiration follows the report. 2. Just now, in fact, an account has arrived such that who could not raise a shout at it? A certain person among the emperor's ministers is said now for the first time to have been vanquished, whereas in past time he prevailed over everyone in everything! 3. You'll accomplish many such things and rumour's report will attend you everywhere. As a result, the emperor, in all likelihood, will have pleasure and you will have a reward!

101 Official corruption is a common theme in the letters, e.g. *epp.* 1312, 1509.

124. TO PRISCIANUS

(Carried by Seleucus to Euphratensis, summer 361¹⁰²) F625 W540

The governorship of Euphratensis was a particularly difficult post in 360–61 due to the impoverishment of the province resulting from intermittent hostilities with Persia between 337 and 350 and, more importantly, the recent invasion of 359–60. Preparations for a counter-attack only drained the province's resources further. Libanius had already complained to Priscianus 1 that poverty was the common lot of the border provinces due to the coming conflict, cf. *ep.* 143/N60. B124 attests the difficulty of Priscianus' job and introduces to him Seleucus 1, a rhetor and friend of both Libanius and Julian, who has been dispatched by the Praetorian Prefect, Helpidius 4, on an administrative duty in Euphratensis. On Seleucus, see the Introduction to B129.

1. Different people pose different questions to those arriving from there: 'What of the Arcadians? What of the Amphictyonians? Where is Philip headed?'¹⁰³ Since I'm always concerned for your interests, I thought fit to learn just one thing, whether the magnitude of the crisis didn't demonstrate your virtue. 2. Many people are telling many tales on a tragic scale, how there were some demanding of you deeds worthy of the Bacchae, for whom everything flowed out of solid rock,¹⁰⁴ and although others recalled Ajax and his labours, there was no one who said, 'Ajax no longer stood fast!'¹⁰⁵ To the contrary, Priscianus endured everything: running, summoning, obeying, conveying, persuading, disputing, fulfilling the desires of his superiors and not resorting to compulsion with his subjects. 3. Moreover, they say that two things have come about for you from all this: poverty and fame. As a result, good hopes are flourishing for you that the emperor¹⁰⁶ will repay you with gratitude, whenever he performs the service of seizing and destroying the Persian. 4. May a god bring this about! This Seleucus is a kinsman of Calliopius,¹⁰⁷ who was nurtured in the learning of Zenobius and who lightens my burden with the boys. 5. Helpidius sent him and he's arrived in order to

102 Constantius II is still alive. He died on 3 November 361.

103 Demosthenes, *Oration* 19.288.

104 At Euripides, *Bacchae* 704–10, the bacchants strike the earth and cause water, wine, milk and honey to flow forth.

105 Ajax, greatest of the Greek heroes after Achilles, 'no longer stood fast' when Hector grasped the stern of a Greek ship and called for fire to burn the Greek fleet, cf. Homer, *Iliad* 15.727.

106 Constantius II.

107 Calliopius 3, brother-in-law of Seleucus 1. He had studied with Zenobius and was an assistant teacher to Libanius.

share the burden of the work.¹⁰⁸ Knowing that it's better for him to depart than to stay, if you aren't kindly disposed towards him, he's hoping to effect through my letter that you'll be kind to him. 6. I might also wish that a favour be done for Calliopius and his father, a favour which I shall redeem through their efforts on behalf of my illegitimate son, for both of them are tutoring Arabius.¹⁰⁹

125. TO PRISCIANUS

(Sent to Euphratensis, summer/autumn 361) F629 W544

Given his extraordinary productivity, Libanius made heavy use of the services of copyists. One of his copyists, Maeonius, has requested a letter on behalf of a friend with legal troubles in Euphratensis. On the book trade in Antioch, see Norman (1960).

1. You undoubtedly know the copyist Maeonius. You know as well that it isn't possible for me to be neglectful of copyists. Now, I don't know the bearer of this letter, but Maeonius makes a great deal of him. 2. Some evil fellow has done harm and escaped and got clean away, and now this fellow has arrived asking to receive justice. 3. So show your anger against the malefactor, so that through your zeal on behalf of this man you may assist the beauty of books.

126. TO CELSUS

(Sent to Cilicia, spring 362) F715 W627

A member of one of Antioch's most distinguished families, Celsus 3 had been a pupil of Libanius at Nicomedia, studied at Athens as a contemporary of Julian and Basil, became a student of Themistius at Constantinople, and later taught rhetoric there. He became a senator in 359, governor of Cilicia in 362, governor of Syria in 363–64 and Syriarch in 364. One of Libanius' closest friends, he received 21 letters between 358 and 365 and is mentioned in 26 others, cf. B44, 47, 49.

In B126–27 Libanius discusses the situation of Titianus, son of the rhetor Acacius 7 of Tarsus. Acacius had contemplated sending Titianus, who had studied at Antioch with Libanius, to Athens for further studies, but has changed his mind. Here Libanius thanks Celsus, currently governor of Cilicia, for having helped to dissuade Acacius from his intended course of action.

¹⁰⁸ *PLRE* 818 suggests that Seleucus was a requisitions officer for woollens and other supplies for the army. The suggestion is rightly doubted by Norman, cf. notes to *ep.* 770/N92.

¹⁰⁹ Cimon Arabius, the child of Libanius and a concubine, cf. *PLRE* 92.

1. It's no wonder if a man has fallen in love with Attica, since the place is by nature very dear to those who've seen it and those who haven't yet. Moreover, fathers think their sons will bring back eloquence for themselves from there or, at least, the reputation for possessing eloquence. 2. Because I respect him, I'd praise Acacius even if he should send his son, but since I love him, I'd wish him not to send the boy at all. Some of the teachers there would need to sleep gently in great luxury due to old age, while others need teachers of their own perhaps to instruct them first how to resolve matters by words rather than weapons!¹¹⁰ 3. As things stand, in my view they're forming soldiers rather than orators, and I saw many boys who bore scars from their wounds in the Lyceum. Perhaps Titianus wouldn't have been one of those, since it's not good even to seem a school companion of boys who plan such activities.¹¹¹ 4. But rest assured that you've helped both me and them: me, by not allowing someone else to be honoured for my labours, them, by not allowing much time to be wasted for what would perhaps have been a small return – that's the best way to put it. 5. In addition to discouraging the journey to Athens, add your encouragement of a journey here. Let him come, if he wants, in order to acquire additional eloquence, but, if he wishes, let him come to enjoy what he already possesses. Surely the governor will receive the young man with complete goodwill. It's the mark of prudent people, in my view, to seize the moment. 6. Although you'll not overlook these people, release Alexander,¹¹² I pray you, from a second 'chain', since before catching his breath he's being crushed, and, although he has escaped one wave, he's struggling with another. Certainly, his financial contribution isn't much lighter than the expenditure for the public baths. 7. So bring him assistance in every respect, and don't let anything from that quarter terrify the young man.

127. TO ACACIUS

(Sent to Cilicia, spring 362) F735 W647

B127 is addressed to Acacius 7, an epic poet, rhetor and frequent correspondent of Libanius. His daughter married Calycius, scion of the prominent Tarsan clan headed by Demetrius 2. We know of four sons from these inter-connected families who

¹¹⁰ Libanius was unimpressed with his teachers in Athens, cf. *Or.* 1.17, 53.

¹¹¹ Libanius had observed student fights in Athens without taking part (*Or.* 1.19ff). See also Eunapius, *Lives of the Sophists* 483ff.

¹¹² A decurion Alexander vi of Tarsus, known only from this letter and *ep.* 528.

studied with Libanius in the late 350s, including Acacius' son Titianus. His case is discussed in B126. Here Libanius expresses his relief and pleasure that Acacius has decided not to send Titianus to Athens for further study.

1. By Athena herself, whatever did you want me to do, with Titianus sent elsewhere, and your vote, through which I waxed great in past time, altered, or not altered but appearing to be so? Was I supposed to applaud and crown myself and twine garlands for the gods and do the sorts of things I did when the boy first arrived? 2. In that case, you'd be justifiably distressed and could draw up an indictment against me for arrogance, on the grounds that your affairs were judged trivial by me, but as things stand you might reasonably take pleasure in my pain, for though pained I uttered not one bitter word, while contemplating that Philip would get the fame for the Phocians' labours¹¹³ – and I wasn't happy about it! 3. A letter from Celsus¹¹⁴ first dispelled my discouragement, since it indicated that your decision had been revoked, and I felt better. Then somebody else announced similar things and then a third person and then thousands of people, since great news has many messengers. 4. The noble Rufinus¹¹⁵ added the finishing touch when he said that the governor had been honoured by the young man with a speech. This involved my being glorified as well, by one's deeds and the other's speech, for they're both my offspring, the one praised and the one producing the praise!¹¹⁶ 5. Delighting in such news, I saw the speaker and read the letters of the one who'd given them, and I counted the honour in both of them superior to the gold of Gyges.¹¹⁷ As for the 'Veterans of Marathon' at the baths, they surpassed all comedy and I can hardly tell you how much mockery they've endured!¹¹⁸ 6. You seem to have spoken falsely with respect to one thing only: your repeated claim not to have the expertise by which you might be able to teach boys. You do have it and your writings don't prevent you; rather, you're both a 'good speaker and a strong spearman'.¹¹⁹ 7. But, I suppose,

113 That is, a rival sophist at Athens would get credit for Libanius' work.

114 Celsus 3, governor of Cilicia and addressee of B126, which is the reply to Celsus' letter alluded to here.

115 Rufinus 3, a close friend whose marriage is alluded to in B42.

116 The young Titianus had delivered a panegyric on the governor Celsus. Both were former pupils of Libanius.

117 On Gyges' wealth, see note on B100.1.

118 The veterans of Marathon were proverbial for a stalwart conservatism that could be regarded, by the late 5th century at least, as antiquated and crusty, cf. Aristophanes, *Clouds* 986; *Acharnians* 181. Here they are code for a faction that has been the butt of a joke at the public baths.

119 At *Iliad* 3.179, Agamemnon is called a 'good king and strong spearman'.

you feared the toils of the sophist's throne! What you write confirms your ability, as do your orations, which will overshadow the efforts of other sophists whenever they're no longer hidden away, but even while they are hidden away, you put everyone to the test in every respect by what has already been sent off and has appeared. 8. I hope that you'll put many speakers to the test for me through your son as well, since he sees and speaks keenly. I thought that he ought to strip down immediately for the contest, in order that we don't end up looking for a missed opportunity.

128. TO GERONTIUS

(Sent to Egypt, summer/autumn 362) F632 W547

Gerontius 2 served as Prefect of Egypt in 361–62, a post that he clearly disliked. In B128 Libanius encourages him not to yearn to be released from office. Other governors occasionally complained of their postings, cf. B143.

1. You do well to love and long for both me and our city, but don't disparage Egypt and don't look for a way to be released from office. 2. If we call blessed those to whom it's been granted in private life to look upon the Nile and her works and Egypt and her works, where must we rank the governor of such things, whose task it is to visit, with great solicitude, the land, cities, harbours, the river, her channels and deltas, and everywhere implant examples of his own virtue and foresight? 3. Why, the people of Alexandria might even carry a good governor about on their own heads! But you are of such good sense and have reached such a high pitch in eloquence, legal knowledge and a desire for noble things, that I at least am confident that everything from previous time will seem insignificant to the Egyptians in comparison to the good things that will come to them from you. 4. But, if you're aggrieved at not seeing me, consider that I'm in the same situation, and console yourself in my absence with a nobler friend. The poet Eudaemon¹²⁰ is a nobler friend, since he understands the beauty of friendship no less than the beauty of poems. He'll make the deeds of your administration immortal.

120 On Eudaemon 3, see the Introduction to B151; also, B69, 158.

129. TO SELEUCUS

(Sent to Cilicia, early 362) F697 W609

Julian entered Constantinople in December 361 and spent the winter there, conducting the business of the new regime, including reception of civic embassies carrying the gold crowns (*aurum coronarium*) due to him as a newly installed emperor. Although he invited many men of letters to visit him at court, Libanius was not among them (cf. *ep.* 369.9–11/N30 for the absence of presents from the Caesar Julian). Moreover, Libanius declined to serve as an ambassador from Antioch, which would have afforded him an opportunity to renew his acquaintance with Julian. He held back with a reserve that is both conspicuous and difficult to understand fully, cf. *Or.* 1.121–25 and *ep.* 736/N88 (describing Julian's arrival in Antioch and initial meeting with Libanius). He had, however, made public statements expressing 'hate' after Constantius' death and these were reported at court.

In B129 Libanius explains his conduct to Seleucus 1, a confidant of the Emperor Julian (cf. B23), high priest of ?Cilicia in 362 (*ep.* 770/N92), and a participant in the Persian campaign. After Julian's death, he was prosecuted, heavily fined and banished (*ep.* 1508/N142). He had intended to compose a history of the Persian expedition.

1. You seem to have forgotten the condition of my mind and body if you seriously expected to see me among the number of legates. Neither am I one of those who desire to run after such things, nor, even if I desired it terribly, would I be able to do it, since it's a task for me even to go from home into the city square. 2. As to those remarks which you said were reported by those very distinguished men,¹²¹ I said none of them with an eye to a reward, rather I pitied land and sea. In any event, if some reward ought to come about for me for that hate, it has come about: the destroyer of everything is departed,¹²² without us requesting any weapon at all against him. 3. Another reward has come about as well, and, in fact, it comes about daily, for I've a share in those things that are done by the emperor for the common prosperity. If he grants some private thing, I shall accept it, and, if he doesn't grant it, I won't blame him. For what greater thing could anyone seek than the reopening of the temples, men's refuge?

121 The legates from Antioch conveying congratulations to the new emperor Julian, cf. *Or.* 1.120.

122 That is, the emperor Constantius II is dead.

130. TO BELAEUS

(Sent to Arabia, summer/autumn 362) F763 W673

B130 concerns the troubles of Orion of Bostra, a Christian and former official attacked during the pagan revival for possessing temple property. Libanius intervened three times with Belaeus, governor of Arabia in 362–63: in the current letter, in person and in *ep.* 819/N103. In this letter to Belaeus, who was appointed by Julian because of his committed polytheism (Julian, *Ep.* 114), Libanius maintains Orion's innocence and stresses that Orion had conducted himself with exemplary moderation when in political office and never waged war against the temples. Those who have expelled him are bent on personal gain under the guise of helping the gods. In *ep.* 819/N103, however, he concedes that Orion may have acquired temple property, but no longer has the property or any wealth from it and no amount of flogging will change that fact. Belaeus should not make a martyr of him, like Mark of Arethusa. For other cases of wrongful possession of temple property, cf. *epp.* 1364 / N105, 724/B182. On Libanius' disapproval of the excesses of the pagan revival, see Norman (1983); Orion's case is also discussed by Barnes (1987), 328–29.

1. Orion became a friend of mine in former times, when my mother introduced us, as he seemed worthy and someone who didn't imitate rather than criticise those who used their influence badly. 2. I also heard from the inhabitants of Bostra that he neither made war on the temples nor harried the priests, and that he lightened many people's misfortunes by conducting his administration¹²³ in the gentlest way. 3. Now, I've seen this man depressed and dispirited. Bursting into tears, he said, 'I've barely escaped the hands of those who fared well under me, and although I harmed no one in any way when it was in my power, I've been all but torn to pieces!' He added further the flight of his brother, the exile of his whole clan, his lands lying fallow and the seizure of his equipment. 4. I know that the emperor wishes none of these things, but says, to the contrary, 'If anybody has in his possession sacred property, let it be taken away, but if he does not, then let him not be dishonoured nor treated ill.'¹²⁴ 5. But, I suppose, this driving people off their

123 *Arche*, used of higher military and administrative posts (*honores, dignitates, administrationes*), which were temporary appointments confirmed by a codicil that was signed by the emperor. *Arche* would not be used of a lower level, permanent post in a provincial *officium*. Orion's post is still unclear. If he had been governor, as is generally assumed, then he governed his own province, which was illegal, but it did happen. Gaianus 6 and Celsus 3 are good examples among Libanius' friends.

124 Julian, *ep.* 41, written at Antioch on 1 August 362, has the character of a general edict, but mentions the inhabitants of Bostra in its closing. Libanius' citation on temple property is not verbatim, but it does preserve the spirit of Julian's letter.

land is the conduct of men unable to bring legal action, since those who were really able to present convincing proof would summon defendants [in court] rather than move to dispossess people. 6. They're hardly discreet in their desire for other people's property under the pretence of helping the gods. However, it's the task of a noble governor, and especially you, to restore these people by a decree and to proclaim to the others that they're not to treat as sitting ducks¹²⁵ whomever they wish; rather, they're to return those things they're holding contrary to the laws and to observe the laws in the future. 7. If, good sir, you promise these things to the former and enforce them on the latter, you'll be restoring the former to their homeland and making the latter better men. At the return of Eucladius,¹²⁶ Orion will return and his scattered family will return, and I'll be seen not to have neglected a friend down on his luck, and you'll be seen to have been persuaded by a friend giving good counsel.

131. TO GAIANUS

(Sent to Phoenicia, 357) F336 W339

B131–36 are addressed to Gaianus 6, governor of Phoenicia in 362–63. He combined legal expertise, the fruit of training in the law school at Berytus, with a deep interest in Greek rhetoric. In addition to working as an advocate at the tribunal of governors of Phoenicia and serving as an assessor in Syria, probably in the court of the *comes Orientis*, he also composed sophistic orations. Libanius did not meet him until his stay in Syria as an assessor (prior to 362), but the two men formed a strong bond through rhetoric. B131–32 are the first in the series to Gaianus, written in 357 or 358, several years before the eight letters sent during Gaianus' governorship (362–63) and the four sent after he was succeeded by Marius 1 in late 363. B131 reads like a typical letter of intercession to a governor, though Gaianus is only an advocate. He was apparently a man of considerable influence.

1. A report has reached me that you've reached the heights of eloquence, and more particularly, that your character is in no way inferior to your eloquence! Having discovered that, I'd happily lay eyes on the man who has acquired these things, but since it isn't yet possible to obtain the better choice, I settled on the next best and am writing a letter. 2. Rather than think it absurd to do this before meeting you, I hold it to be a sign of sincere affection. So persuaded am I that you'll not dishonour my friendship, that I

125 Literally, 'Mysian spoils', a proverb often used by Libanius (see note on B13.7).

126 Orion's brother.

won't even hesitate to ask a favour.¹²⁷ 3. Domnus is your fellow citizen and a friend of mine. Although poor, he's becoming a city councillor – through inexperience in affairs and a dearth of supporters. When he came here in order to contest it on the grounds that he deserved to get a release, he encountered a delay, and as he was about to depart, he asked me to write to you to help him, since he has hopes in you for other reasons and he's particularly convinced that some help may result from a letter. 4. I count his need as my own gain and a double gain, in fact, if I succeed in gratifying a friend and in acquiring another friend. So I readily heeded him. 5. That night he departed since those with whom he was obliged to travel were in a hurry, but I didn't, for that reason, neglect my promise. Rather I'll entreat you both now and again to be a haven for Domnus and to persuade the good Tyrians that to fasten on people who are destitute is to drive citizens away, not to provide patrons for the city.

132. TO GAIANUS

(Carried by Boethus to Phoenicia, 357) F119 W119

Libanius' friendship with Gaianus required careful attention, since he, like Anatolius 3, enjoyed sophistic repartee, but was also sensitive to slights, or so it appears from the current letter and B136.

1. That you're able to achieve everything through the power of eloquence and that you slander no one at the tribunal for any amount of money, but slander *me*, and what's more, for no reward, what's one to make of that? 2. You attacked my remark unfairly – that I shall clarify, but let me recapitulate a little. You arrived here to give assistance to a Phoenician, a governor of Phoenicia,¹²⁸ a man of good sense who understood very well whose flow of eloquence he needed. Eager to lay eyes on you, I took pleasure in seeing and conversing with you a little, but as you were obliged to leave for a midday meal, I let you go. 3. On the following day, the court occupied you, my school me. After shortening the lesson as much as possible, I ran off to the gates of your tribunal, thirsting to hear you and noisily cutting through the crowd. Then, I couldn't hear you, since you'd stopped, but I could hear about

¹²⁷ Libanius prefers not to write to request a favour of someone he has not met, especially a high official, but occasionally he is obliged to do so, cf. *ep.* 558.1/B32 (to Musonius 1, *magister officiorum*) and 95.3/B120 (to Pannychius, governor of Euphratensis).

¹²⁸ The date of the incident must be prior to mid-362. In theory, a Phoenician should not govern Phoenicia, but Gaianus himself is also an exception to this legal norm.

you, since advocates were saying many fine things in praise of you as an advocate – you didn't allow them to envy your triumph. 4. On the following day, I came back again early, but the *comes*¹²⁹ wasn't yet on duty and the boys were calling me.¹³⁰ So you argued your case, once again I heard about it, so to speak, I was upset and cursed what had to be. 5. Why must I go on at length? You got your verdict before I got my desire. Nonetheless, to others I counted myself among the lucky ones, just as happens to those who go to Elis and fail to see Zeus,¹³¹ but out of shame claim that they saw him! 6. I too had experienced this and when a number a people were sitting around Eubulus¹³² (you and I both were among them) and some praise for you arose and people looked to me to see if I was in agreement and knew the speaker, I concealed my mishap, and although I claimed to them that I was one of the listeners, I whispered the truth in your ear that I was a 'non-listener', revealing that you needed to repay me in kind. 7. You weren't immediately upset at this – at least you didn't show it – but when you went away you labelled it arrogance, and that came to my attention. How in the world is it arrogance, unless praising you and not confessing my misfortune are arrogance? 8. You also accuse me because we didn't spend as much time together as we should have done. But the punishment is mutual. Surely it's better that you blame my lack of leisure, that I blame yours and that we both blame each other's. My most excellent and worthy descendent of Demosthenes, don't judge friendships in this way, but by the friendship itself, since many who drink together daily would also happily drink one another's blood! 10. Let others be hypocrites,¹³³ but you abide by your character and offer as a sign of your not having changed the fact that you won't allow this Boethus¹³⁴ to make repeated requests, for he's a kinsman of the great Zenobius,¹³⁵ an acquaintance of mine, an old man, as you see, and he's being wronged.

129 *Archon*, used interchangeably for a governor, the *comes Orientis*, Prefect of the East and other high officials. Petit, *FOL* 113, infers that the case was being heard before the tribunal of the *comes*.

130 Lessons in Libanius' school began at dawn.

131 Pheidias' statue of Zeus in the temple at Olympia.

132 One of the most prominent city councillors in Antioch and the principal rival of the faction that had been headed by Libanius' uncle Phasganius.

133 Lit. 'residents of Abydos', proverbial for dissembling and hypocrisy, cf. *ep.* 734.

134 The elder Boethus lived in Elusa in Palestine. His son Boethus worked with Libanius in Antioch. Their kinsman Zenobius had been Libanius' teacher.

135 Cf. *epp.* 25/N1 (to Zenobius) and 101/N54 (to Domitius Modestus).

133. TO GAIANUS

(Sent to Phoenicia, winter 362/3) F799 W709

Libanius discusses the good report about Gaianus' governorship that has reached the Emperor Julian in Antioch.

1. I am indeed your treasure, so it's hardly surprising if you are also my treasure. Nevertheless, I'm not yet persuaded that excellence in administration has come to you from me! 2. You brought it with you when you came here from Phoenicia, and through it you served as another's assessor¹³⁶ and became more potent than a magic charm by your manner. Now Phoenicia reaps the reward for what she taught you,¹³⁷ since she made you noble and she's now saved and nurtured by her pupil. 3. I call salvation and nurturing *not* that one is allowed to do absolutely anything, as might be the case with a companion and a Phoenician as governor, but rather the fact that I hear you honour those whom you ought and chastise those whom you must, demanding first and foremost that your friends do not disobey the laws.¹³⁸ 4. Whoever has authority and allows his old friends to ignore the laws does a disservice to both parties, appearing to honour friendship, while in reality he doesn't realise that he despises himself and his friends. 5. You certainly accused Rumour of being slow-footed if you thought you were writing to people ignorant of those matters – she long ago anticipated your letter, performing the task of a winged god, and she not only filled the city square with her news, but also entered the palace and brought pleasure to our emperor and prophet. 6. He rejoiced and spoke things such as befitted a man who is pleased. I myself was present and heard some of this, and I rejoiced and joined in the applause, which he fully recognised and which you are doubtless imagining!

134. TO GAIANUS

(Sent to Phoenicia, 362/3) F800 W710

B134 alludes to Libanius' imperial salary, which was rescinded by the Prefect Helpidius in 360, but restored by Secundus Salutius 3 in 362. Libanius' salary, paid partially in kind, *viz.* wheat and barley, partially in gold, was drawn from the two

¹³⁶ Gaianus was assessor to the governor of Syria or the *comes Orientis*.

¹³⁷ An allusion to legal training at Berytus.

¹³⁸ As a Phoenician, Gaianus was forbidden to govern Phoenicia. Apparently, Julian has granted him an exemption.

provinces of Syria and Phoenicia. It seems odd that Libanius' salary was not drawn entirely from a pay office in Antioch. Part of the salary was assigned in kind (*annona*) and paid from the taxes collected by the governor of Phoenicia, who calculated an exchange rate and forwarded the salary in coin to Libanius. The governor Gaianus has promptly dispatched the restored salary along with comments suggesting his amusement at finding himself Libanius' paymaster. On Libanius' salaries, see Kaster (1983); also, *epp.* 28/N65 and 740/N89. Liebeschuetz (1972), 89–90, comments on the current letter.

1. I assumed that you'd no longer be so reliable about writing as a result of your office and the inundation of business. But I guess you both perform your duties and have retained your habit. At any rate, you've surpassed me in the number of your letters, and I don't do anything but write! 2. Their beauty is equal to their number and all my grain and gold are trivial to me in comparison to the elegance of your letter, by which you force me not to remain silent, since I'll seem to have written for the sake of money, if, when I've accepted the money, I refrain from writing. 3. I sense that you're laughing at having got me under your thumb and at having the authority to trifle with me and to assess the value of my wheat and barley! But, rest assured, you'll very soon have more authority over me and you'll grant me something greater, you who marvel at your present situation. Then you'll listen to me speaking while you sit on a fitting throne,¹³⁹ and I shall listen to you resolving with your fluent voice the disputes of those in court, and we shall exchange mutual praises, you praising my work out of goodwill, I yours out of honesty.

135. TO GAIANUS

(Carried by Beros to Phoenicia, summer 363) F1422 W1472

B135 is the first sent to Gaianus after the death of Julian. The Beros recommended here is otherwise unknown.

1. I wouldn't ask you how things stood with you, for I know that you've been dealt a blow. Neither would I recount my own situation, since I'd be speaking to someone who already knows it. 2. For a long while I abstained from speaking and writing – silence was best. But when Beros said that he was being done wrong unless he departed from here with a letter, I was moved to speech

139 Since Gaianus is governor *consularis* of Phoenicia, the natural promotion would be to the throne of a *vicarius* or a prefect.

only with difficulty and only to the extent that you see here. I honour Beros on account of that past dishonour into which he fell due to being upright.

136. TO GAIANUS

(Sent to Phoenicia, end of 363) F1218 W1044

Libanius attempts to mollify Gaianus, who is offended at not receiving a letter. Gaianus had imputed Libanius' silence to the fact that he is no longer a governor and thereby no longer worthy of notice.

1. I accused you of the very wrong of which I was considered guilty, and, moreover, I persuaded myself that I accused you with greater justice. You charged me with not writing, while I charged you with not answering. But neither you nor I is guilty if neither the one who wrote nor the one who didn't receive is guilty. 2. What then? Well, we could to blame the noble Marius for not having given you the letter,¹⁴⁰ and he could blame the business arising from his office, which has prompted him to overlook many things on many occasions. The copy of my letter has appeared to support my case.¹⁴¹ Let Marius absolve himself the blame as he wishes! 3. If I began to admire you from the time when you entered office, then I'm a flatterer and I'm bad in that respect, and whoever suffers from *that* is not to be considered a free man either. But if you lured my soul by your eloquence, which was long before your office, then don't skip over that and launch into specious accusations, and don't suppose that my way is to 'tread ever so lightly', as Pindar says,¹⁴² rather think of me as like adamant. 4. I would pray that you serve in office, for I love the cities, but I've respected and loved you no less in retirement than I did when you were governor. Yet you're so tetchy that you went looking for revenge at the first opportunity to come your way. Mind you, Julius¹⁴³ brought *letters* from other people, but from you an accusation of silence that was scarcely befitting a gentleman of the sort your many deeds and speeches have shown you to be.

140 Probably *ep.* 1461, the letter of introduction Libanius had given the incoming governor, Marius 1, to deliver to outgoing governor, Gaianus. Marius apparently didn't deliver the letter.

141 An allusion to the copybooks Libanius kept of letters dispatched to correspondents, cf. *epp.* 88.5/N45, 1307.3/B185.

142 Lit. 'tread on a slender branch', cf. Pindar fr. 230, ed. Bergk-Schroeder. How Pindar meant the image is unclear, but for Libanius the 'slender branch' is unstable and must be walked on with great care and wariness.

143 Otherwise unknown.

137. TO MARIUS

(Sent to Phoenicia, end of 363) F1124 W1292

B137–38 from the end of 363 contain the first reference to Libanius' resumption of declamations (see also *ep.* 1128/N123) after the news of Julian's death on 26 June 363 had reached Antioch. Initially suicidal and then severely depressed, Libanius wrote little, whether letters or orations (cf. *ep.* 1430/N116), for some six months. Near the end of the year, however, his friends prevailed upon him to deliver an *epideixis*, which he calls in B137 his 'winter offering', implying that such a performance was an annual event. B137–41 are addressed to the Antiochene sophist, Marius 1, who succeeded Gaianus 6 as governor of Phoenicia in autumn 363.

1. Your letters are both many and beautiful, worthy, on the one hand, of the eloquence impressed upon your mind from boyhood, and revealing, on the other hand, that affection for me flourishes in you. For my own part, even if I don't write as much, nonetheless in the matter of friendship I do my equal part. 2. As I write these things, the city has been summoned to hear a certain speech of mine, which, if it will enjoy good fortune, will also receive you as a critic. 3. I didn't think it appropriate at this point to impose upon the excellent Rufinus, since he avoids such gatherings,¹⁴⁴ but as I was myself being imposed upon by the aficionados and obliged to pay my winter offering,¹⁴⁵ I was neither able to put these fellows off nor could I overlook Rufinus. So I'm inviting him and he's accepted. The voyage will be in the care of the Dioscuri.¹⁴⁶

138. TO MARIUS

(Sent to Phoenicia, 363/4) F1135 W1296

B138 reports on the success of Libanius' declamation, over which Rufinus presided as 'umpire' (*athlothes*) and the dispatch of a copy to Marius for his critical evaluation.

144 Aradius Rufinus 11, newly appointed as *comes Orientis* (363–64). *PLRE* wrongly infers that Libanius' speech was a panegyric on the new *comes*. Libanius would not have written that he 'didn't think it right to impose' if he was intending to deliver a panegyric on the *comes*. Rufinus was apparently skilled in judging sophistic performances, as we learn from B138.1, but he was not a devotee and normally 'avoided' them.

145 Petit (1957a), 100, infers from this evidence that Libanius delivered an annual winter declamation on a set day.

146 Castor and Polydeuces, guardians of mariners.

1. I made my entrance and gave my speech, there was a following wind and the ‘umpire’ was a good judge, since he has experience from similar occasions.¹⁴⁷ If you weren’t engaged on greater things, I would have said that you pained me by being absent, but now you give me pleasure by being crowned in the greatest of contests. 2. You will receive the book, which can now be called fortunate, and if it should receive your favourable vote, it will also be called excellent.

139. TO MARIUS

(Carried by Apringius to Phoenicia, spring 364) F1170 W1116

In B139 Libanius introduces to Marius 1 as governor of Phoenicia the Antiochene advocate Apringius, who intends to study law at Berytus. For Apringius’ background and the rivalry between law and rhetoric, see the introduction to B163–67.

1. Apringius is going back to schoolboy pursuits, in accordance with the old saying, ‘Once more to Delphi’.¹⁴⁸ He believes that a man who intends to be a successful advocate also needs knowledge of the law, though in the past an orator found himself someone with an expertise in law and they gained strength through one another. Nowadays, however, the man with no knowledge of the law is a veritable ‘fellow from Aegium – a nonentity and a no-account’.¹⁴⁹ 2. So I praise Apringius and consider him blessed. I praise him for racing off where he must and I count him blessed now as he sets foot in Phoenicia, which, though already beautiful, you’ve made yet more beautiful! What he would have if his own father governed that people, he’ll enjoy now that you’re governing Phoenicia, or rather, he’ll enjoy even greater things. He might find his own father to be occasionally rather severe, but your disposition is always gentle and overflowing with serenity. 3. So clearly you’ll put the young man in the hands of his teachers, take care to smooth out the rough edges that youth is prone to have,¹⁵⁰ grant him audiences with yourself and you’ll show him kindnesses in other ways.

147 It was the mark of an official’s level of culture that he was skilled and enthusiastic in presiding over sophistic performances. Cf. *ep.* 405.12/N6 (Libanius’ close friend Quirinus acting as judge at a sophistic *agon*).

148 In the Classical period, Athens sent an annual delegation to Delphi, thereby giving rise to the proverb, cf. *ep.* 532.

149 A variant on the common proverb about Megarians. Aegium and Megara were occasionally linked as cities with low repute, cf. Plutarch, *Moral Essays* 682F, 730; Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* 2.216.27.

150 An echo of Plato, *Theaetetus* 146a.

140. TO MARIUS

(Carried by Chrysogonus to Phoenicia, summer 364) F1208 W1178

B140 concerns Chrysogonus, a young Phoenician forced from his lands by corrupt guardians after the death of his parents (*ep.* 1273). His studies in rhetoric and medicine had been curtailed due to poverty and bad luck, and he hoped in summer 364 to get himself registered at the tribunal of the governor of Phoenicia. This would give him access to the clout necessary to face down his enemies in the hinterland. *Epp.* 1273 and 1281 reveal that he successfully reoccupied his property through a verdict from the following governor of Phoenicia, Ulpianus 3.

1. A Phoenician from those in the hinterland, this Chrysogonus started out rich and became poor because of certain of his fellow citizens, who started out poor and became rich. 2. Now, initially he was one of my circle and he wasn't bad at rhetoric. Then he sailed to Egypt in order to acquire the art of medicine with dispatch, since he was invited by Magnus, a teacher of medicine and a kinsman. But when he arrived, Magnus made out that he didn't know him. The young man got discouraged and fell ill. 3. So he sailed back, cursing Magnus since he'd acquired nothing and had lost no small part of what he once knew. He took over his ancestral estates when fear compelled the unjust to restrain themselves, but he was driven out again when the fear had passed. 4. So his one hope is to become one of the advocates at your tribunal and to meet with some goodwill from you. If those who blame Zeus for having made their property small¹⁵¹ should get to know *that*, they'll withdraw from other peoples' property prior to a verdict from you, or, if they're unwilling to do that, then they'll be expelled by that verdict.

141. TO MARIUS

(Sent to Phoenicia, autumn 364) F1217 W1327

The year 364 was difficult for Libanius. He continued to mourn the death of Julian, attacks on prominent pagans continued and a number of friends died. All of his news, as he had recently complained to Aristophanes, was 'unpleasant, painful, and worthy of tears' (*ep.* 1214).

1. For a long time I didn't write, since for a long time I was in mourning. Many men have departed from us, and that same multitude were also the

¹⁵¹ A jibe at those who blame god for their lack of wealth and whose illegal conduct has no justification beyond this resentment. The phrase seems proverbial.

best, some of them not yet old men, others in the flower of youth. 2. I needed to mourn in the same manner as other people and separately, in my own way, with my books. Nothing else consoled me apart from the fact that you've raised up the cities, in which you've created peace in the midst of a great storm, while in other cities the storm prevails.¹⁵² 3. So it would be fitting to praise you for your knowledge of governance and to praise Fortune for arriving to deliver you from the cares of political office. Indeed, you alone took over office unwillingly and you were proved a man in office, the thing best able to reveal the man, as the proverb says.¹⁵³ Now you are leaving office with pleasure, bringing us a crown from Phoenicia greater than the one given to athletes by the Eleans.¹⁵⁴ That crown testifies to strength, while this one of yours testifies to virtue. 4. You'll exact justice from Maximus¹⁵⁵ for your not having received my speech, unless the same thing will exculpate Maximus as well, since he too was grieving.

142. TO HIERIUS

(Sent to Egypt, spring 364) F1183 W1318

Hierius 4, a man of letters and philosopher, was Prefect of Egypt in 364. Libanius asks him to encourage Egyptian athletes to participate in the Olympic games in Antioch in 364. This letter is one of a series of five written to procure athletes for the Olympics of 364 (*epp.* 1179, 1180/N125, 1181–82, 1183/B142).

1. I'm summoning a 'Lydian to the plain',¹⁵⁶ when I encourage Hierius, beloved of the gods, to honour the gods, a thing that he continues to do night and day. 2. As for the great Serapis, the fertilising Nile and the other gods who hold Egypt, you'll worship them by action and prayer, by your presence [there] and by sacrificing, whereas it's possible for you to honour *our* Zeus, the saviour who resides at Daphne, through athletes, if you should praise the eager ones, rebuke the lazy ones and make clear to all of them that you're as concerned about the games here as you are about what's done there. 3. Your reward for this enthusiasm will be the only one you know how to accept, and

152 Here the 'storm' is the anti-pagan reaction that set in after Julian's death.

153 That 'office reveals the man' was attributed to either Solon or Bias among the Greek Sages, cf. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 3.1130a.

154 At the Olympic games, which were under the supervision of nearby Elis.

155 Maximus xiii, the secretary who supervised copying and distribution of Libanius' declamations. He is mentioned also in *Or.* 42.3, 5.

156 See note on B73.2.

due to which you've remained in poverty: we'll praise you, both in the opening contests in town and at the greater games at Daphne,¹⁵⁷ and we shall say to the visitors when they admire the victors, 'The Olympic games may have them, but it was the righteous Hierius who sent them!'

143. TO ULPIANUS

(Sent to ?Arabia, March/April 364) F1155 W1099

Ulpianus 3 and Olympius Palladius 18 were brothers from Samosata, both of whom held governorships in the early 360s. Ulpianus governed three provinces: Cappadocia (361–63), Arabia (364) and Phoenicia (364) while his brother governed Isauria (363–65). In spring 364, both were complaining of their postings. Palladius longed for the amenities of a great city (*ep.* 1133), while Ulpianus found Arabia very difficult to manage due to Bedouin raids (*ep.* 1236) and, more importantly, civic unruliness that was exacerbated, in Ulpianus' view, by the actions of one of his predecessors, presumably Belaeus, a committed pagan appointed by the emperor Julian in 362. B130 to Belaeus had addressed the religious faction-fighting that plagued the provincial capital, Bostra.

Ulpianus was now dealing with the fallout from the pagan revival. In spring 364, Libanius wrote twice (*ep.* 1127 and the current letter) to encourage him to persevere in his task. In *ep.* 1127 Libanius had argued that Arabia was a difficult place, but that Ulpianus would tame those intractable people and thereby win glory. Here he claims that Ulpianus' efforts have compelled aggressors to 'refrain from seeking anything more', that is, from pressing for further advantage in faction-fights, and he concludes that Ulpianus was 'in the appropriate rank', that is, the right man for the job.

1. I understood full well that they would quickly refrain from seeking anything more and that you would be in the appropriate rank. 2. Now that you've won this victory, add another, or rather, you've already added it, in that you seem to be the 'common founder'¹⁵⁸ of Arabia, which you wouldn't be called if you hadn't saved the cities from the destruction that an evil daemon¹⁵⁹ brought upon them. 3. Hold fast to your remedy for the cities, garner praises by your toils and don't count the smoke of that land in which you perform such great deeds less honourable than the smoke of Ithaca.¹⁶⁰ Think where

157 On the Olympic games at Antioch, see Liebeschuetz (1972), 136–40.

158 A phrase common in the language of praise used in inscriptions.

159 A characteristically Greek way to express the spirit of faction that plagues the civic life of Bostra.

160 Athena, in the council of gods on Olympus, explains how Odysseus yearns to see the hearth-smoke leaping up from his own land (*Odyssey* 1.58).

that famous man would have been, who did everything to see the smoke of Ithaca, if he'd clung to his hearth-smoke, and hadn't gone on campaign in the first place or captained the 'red-cheeked ships'.¹⁶¹ 4. We wouldn't know that particular verse about the smoke nor would it exist at all, if Odysseus had sat at home gazing at his dog and his fields! 5. Now, if you've no desire for praise, then you're wrong. If, on the other hand, you do desire it and you suppose that you'll acquire it in your sleep, your conjecture is mistaken. Caring for the cities involves toil, I know, but it's sweet to tell about this care after the fact. You know this pleasure, for you experienced it when you returned from the land of the Cappadocians and you told me the kind of man you'd been towards them and what their attitude had been towards you. 6. I know that you'll recount and that I'll listen to things even more splendid than those when this office of yours has also, through your skill, come to its close.

¹⁶¹ *Iliad* 2.637.

V. LETTERS TO MEN OF LETTERS AND *CURIALES*

144. TO DEMETRIUS

(Sent to Cilicia, winter 358) F23 W22

B144–47 are addressed to Demetrius 2, a leading citizen of Tarsus and a prominent member of an extended influential clan that sent four sons to study with Libanius in the 350s. His brothers were Hierocles 3 and Julianus 14. He and Libanius frequently corresponded with one another and they exchanged orations. Libanius occasionally rebukes parents or kinsmen of students for their miserliness, cf. *epp.* 428/N10, 1352/B157. Here he rebukes Demetrius because one of his nephews, despite his uncle's wealth, must live in poverty as a student. The boy's father is not alive, or Libanius would write directly to him.

1. The lad didn't come on his own to me without reasoning it through, rather, he was well aware that his uncle loves me and is honoured by me, and on his arrival, he found what he'd hoped for. Whether he also found my rhetoric to be potent, I don't know, but in any event he found as much goodwill as you would have bestowed on him at his appearance if you were in my place.
2. He's applied himself to rhetoric and, though for a long time he only gave the semblance of grasping it, now he is really and truly grasping the art of eloquence. He lives in poverty, however, and in circumstances inappropriate for a kinsman of yours. If you were short of money, it would be my task to help him, but since you're rich and doing well (though you suppose that being hard up helps young men towards learning), I'd advise you either to send him money yourself or permit me to assist him. Luxury isn't the only obstacle to learning – going hungry is, too.

145. TO DEMETRIUS

(Sent to Cilicia, winter 360/1) F258 W261

B145 alludes to gifts sent by Demetrius to Libanius and to the problem of Libanius' imperial salary from his chair of rhetoric in Constantinople. Though he left that post

in 354, he continued to collect a salary from it until 360, when the new Prefect of the East, Helpidius 4, stopped it, an action which Libanius equates with making ‘war on the Muses’. Helpidius lacked a traditional rhetorical education and had risen through the ranks of the notaries, hence the jibe at his hostility to culture (see Introduction to B15). Ironically, relations between Libanius and ‘that dunce Helpidius’ (*ep.* 740/N89) were patched up when Libanius’ nephew, Bassianus 2, married Helpidius’ daughter, cf. Introduction to *ep.* 1380/B15. Moreover, the salary was restored under Julian, cf. Introduction to *ep.* 800/B134. On Libanius’ salaries, see Kaster (1983).

1. Your letter is itself a cause for celebration, as is anything that arrives from you. You did well to discover an appropriate moment for the gifts, since you’ve now really and truly sent them to me, whereas then you would have been sending them into the hands of men looking to seize them. 2. Well, Euphemius¹ will give me answers when he comes. Now he’s been summoned and has run off to the emperor, who is taking his pleasure in the hunt.² 3. Concerning my salary, I think that the worthy Olympius³ will stir everything up but will accomplish nothing or little, something not much better than nothing. The reason? The one who has the authority to grant the salary has sworn an oath to make war on the Muses.

146. TO DEMETRIUS

(Sent to Cilicia, spring/summer 362) F727 W639

B146–48 all concern the healing shrine of Asclepius of Aegae in Cilicia, whose fame in the Greek Near East rivalled that of the Asclepius shrines at Eleusis and Pergamum. The temple of Asclepius had been pulled down and its building fabric taken away by the 350s, but the healing shrine continued to function, albeit in reduced circumstances. Eusebius claims that Constantine demolished the temple (*Life of Constantine* 3.56), but depredation of the cult site probably continued under Constantius, since Julian in 362 held the local bishop accountable, on the grounds that local Christians had despoiled the shrine (Zonaras, *Epitome* 13.12.30–34). In spring 362, Count Julian, the emperor’s uncle, outlined in a letter to the emperor a plan for restoration of the temples of the East. Julian agreed to all of the plans, stipulating that the shrine of Apollo at Daphne should take precedence over everything

1 Euphemius 2, an imperial official in a fiscal bureau (360–63). He later presided over the trial of Libanius’ kinsman, Thalassius 2, cf. *ep.* 620/B13.

2 Constantius II wintered in Antioch in 360/1. He is temporarily absent on a hunt, the same hunt for which Libanius’ cousin had to reserve most of the wild beasts he had originally purchased for the games connected with his Syriarchy, cf. *epp.* 218/B3 and 219/B4.

3 Libanius’ lifelong friend, Olympius 3.

else (Julian, *Ep.* 29). B147.2 suggests that Count Julian proceeded vigorously, and thus controversially, in the repossession of stolen temple property and in reconstruction of Asclepius' temple at Aegae. The pagan revival also inspired a flurry of sophistic activity at Tarsus among Libanius' friends Demetrius 2 and Acacius 7, themselves kinsmen and both skilled orators. Demetrius composed two orations on Asclepius and Acacius one oration. Libanius himself was keenly interested in these activities at Aegae, in part because of close connections with the extended clan of Demetrius and Acacius, but more importantly because of his intimacy with the god of healing due to his chronic migraines. His brother had travelled to Aegae in late winter or early spring 362 in the hope of receiving an 'oracle' from the god, that is, medical advice normally resulting from 'incubation' or sleeping in the shrine (*ep.* 707–08).

In B146 he requests that Demetrius seek an 'oracle' on his behalf, in addition to sending him copies of the two orations on the god. Migraines plagued him throughout 362.

1. What in the world the debt⁴ is which you claim I didn't repay, I don't know, but the affliction in my head, which goes way back – I was struck when I was 20 years old and it's 28 years since then⁵ – has now become the talk of the town due to the gods' acts of assistance, for the effects from sacred rites on the body have something uncanny about them and provoke much discussion. 2. Don't simply suffer along with me, but, in addition, persuade the god who posed the challenge⁶ to you to utter some oracle about me as well. He is bound to pay a reward for those two speeches, which Zenobius⁷ also recalled for me with applause. It was therefore clear that the god had had a hand in them! 3. I myself would wish to honour the god by your speeches, and I could do that by reading them. So send them, and instruct a neighbouring city⁸ who this [god] is who sustains your own city.

4 Apparently, medical help from the gods to be repaid in the form of an oration.

5 Libanius alleges that he suffered twice from lightning strikes, or, perhaps, from near misses, the first when he was 20 years old, standing by his teacher and intent on studying Aristophanes' *Acharnians* (*Or.* 1.9–10), the second while journeying from Nicomedia to Constantinople in 351 (*Or.* 1.77).

6 Demetrius was 'called' by the god to compose an oration.

7 Probably a kinsman of Libanius' teacher Zenobius, who was dead by 362. On the family's activities, see the introduction to B171.

8 Antioch.

147. TO ACACIUS

(Sent to Cilicia, winter 362) F695 W607

Libanius reacts in B147–48 to the oration on Asclepius composed by Acacius 7, whose son Titianus was Libanius' student and had handed the oration to him in class.

1. 'Not without heaven's help', says Homer,⁹ nor were you [inspired] to produce these things without Asclepius' help; on the contrary, he surely had a hand in your composition. It's likely, since he's a son of Apollo, that he has some of his father's art and that he allots it to whomever he wishes. 2. How would he not assist you in a speech on himself? From the first syllable to the last, the speech is a wasp's nest of the Muses,¹⁰ resplendent with beauty,¹¹ persuading by its arguments and accomplishing its purpose, at one moment revealing the power of the god from the epigrams of those who were cured,¹² at another moment lamenting the war of the godless against the temple, its destruction, the fire, the altars overthrown, the suppliants wronged and not permitted to be released from afflictions. 3. But he who reveals himself better than Hadrian in his attitude towards the temples has been evoked with divine skill,¹³ while his elder of the same name¹⁴ doesn't allow the man receiving his summons to take his own counsel, but compels everything in accordance with his designs, while he charms with choice words.¹⁵ Moreover, the size of

9 Pandarus arguing to Aeneas that Diomedes could not be inspired with such battle fury without the help of a god (*Iliad* 5.185).

10 Said of Sophocles, cf. Philostratus the Younger, *Pictures* 13.

11 Like Helen, as Priam gazes at her on the walls of Troy (*Iliad* 3.392).

12 Inscriptions attesting remarkable cures have been preserved at Asclepius' shrine at Epidauros.

13 The emperor Julian surpasses the emperor Hadrian (117–38), a prodigious traveller and builder famous for his magnanimity in restoring temples and other monuments in the names of the original builders, cf. *Historia Augusta, Life of Hadrian* 19.

14 Julianus 12, uncle of the Emperor Julian and *comes Orientis* (362–63).

15 This obscure passage concerns the efforts of the *comes Orientis*, Julianus 12, to recover stolen temple property. The difficulty of the passage is due to the controversial nature of his actions. The man who receives the official's summons, but is not allowed to take his own counsel, is, I think, an allusion to local officials, to whom the *comes* does not delegate the difficult task of repossessing temple goods, since they are apt to do little or nothing in order not to provoke local hostility. Temple goods, especially temple columns, were bought up by provincial aristocrats and reused in the construction of grand houses. The appropriation or demolition of these houses involved risks for the officials giving the order. The *comes* appears to take charge personally. He 'compels' (ἀναγκάζει) everything in accordance with his designs, while he charms with choice words (ὀνόματα). Why he charms by ὀνόματα, literally, 'names' and not by λόγοι, 'words' in the sense of 'eloquence' is unclear. In any event, Libanius was an

the speech is a source of beauty – its length is exactly right. 4. You seem to me to have become a better orator than you were before your calamity. When you regained, with the gods' help, your powers of reasoning,¹⁶ I suppose the gods consoled you for what had befallen you with the bonus that the powers of reasoning you regained were more beautiful than those you were robbed of. I'm convinced that this is also what happened to Pelops after the cauldron, for the son restored to Tantalus was more beautiful than he was when he was chopped up for the banquet of the gods.¹⁷ 5. But I also received with it that beautiful letter about beautiful things, a perfect companion piece to those subjects your letter wished to make public. But listen to what I experienced. I received both of them, the letter and the speech, in the middle of my meeting with students – Titianus handed them over, smiling, since he knew what he was giving. 6. Although I read the letter straightaway, I decided that I would defer the other for a moment of peace. But I couldn't do it – no sooner did I set it down than I took it up! Then I shared my time between the boys and you. This was a gain for the boys, as I spoke all the more fluently about you. So write on behalf of the god, take action, and in your prayers do not forget my headache either.

148. TO ACACIUS

(Sent to Cilicia, spring 363) F1342 W1052

1. It seems to me that the god has created the tale for himself through *your* mouth, for the speech's charms wouldn't have been so complete had the god

avid supporter of the pagan revival, but all of his letters on the issue of restitution of stolen temple property are defences of men who had bought temple goods under Constantius, when, by Libanius' argument, it was perfectly legal. Cf. *epp.* 724/B182 (defending Theodulus' grand house in Antioch, built from temple spoils), 763/B130 and 819/N103 (defending Orion of Bostra), 1364 /N105 (defending his kinsmen, Thalassius 2 and Bassianus 2).

16 The nature of Acacius' illness is unknown.

17 Tantalus defied the Olympians in three ways, 1) by divulging divine secrets to mortals, 2) by sharing ambrosia with his friends and 3) by chopping up his son Pelops and serving him at a banquet of the gods as a test of divine knowledge. Demeter, distraught at the loss of Persephone, alone failed to detect the ruse and tasted of the shoulder before realising her error. The gods restored Pelops with an ivory shoulder, but consigned Tantalus to Hades to suffer his famous torments. Standing in a pool with fruit branches above him, he is eternally tantalised, the waters receding before his thirsty lips, while the fruit is forever beyond the reach of his outstretched hands. Cf. Homer, *Odyssey* 11.582ff. (punishment in Hades), Pindar, *Olympian* 1.29ff. (tale of the shoulder rejected), Apollodorus, *Library*, *Epitome* 2 (Pelops restored more beautiful than before).

not possessed your soul. There are many charms of that sort in the house of Apollo and it's no wonder that Asclepius has imitated his own father.¹⁸ 2. For that reason, I'm amazed that you urge me to correct the speech – I admire every aspect of it and I can't change anything! There is loftiness, beauty, descriptions of places, instruction on diseases and cures and, most importantly, it has one poetic quality after another:¹⁹ metre and the Graces and the light of clarity and nothing is absent that ought to be present, nor is anything present that ought to be absent. 3. So, when you persuade the sculptors who've come to Pisa to change some aspect of Zeus, then order me to do the same thing for the speech of a Pheidias!²⁰

149. TO DEMETRIUS

(Carried by Macedonius, spring 363) F1353 W1420

B149 is a letter of introduction carried by a retired advocate, Macedonius ii, whose sons had studied with Libanius and who has been appointed by the governor of Syria, Alexander 5, to be 'small claims judge' (*iudex pedaneus*) for the city of Tarsus. His task was to resolve minor legal disputes, thereby reducing the governor's case load and saving litigants time, money, and stress. On the *iudex pedaneus*, see Liebeschuetz (1972), 113.

1. This man is a companion of Ulpianus²¹ and father of companions of mine. Although he displayed his power in the law courts, he has now retired from the law. When the governor decided that he ought to employ retired advocates in defence of the cities, even though this fellow was summoned elsewhere, he preferred your city, not, in my view, because of the sea or because it is great and beautiful, but because you are lovers of learning, noble and gentle towards visitors. 2. He will resolve disputes for you and deliver the disputants from the many, long meanderings and great expenses of the legal process. Outdo the others in your friendship towards him, and he will count you before the rest. 3. You will see his rhetorical prowess when he gives judgement, whereas Macedonius will see yours everywhere.

18 Asclepius, the son of Apollo and Coronis, is said here to imitate his father by his gift of literary inspiration.

19 Literally, 'the lyre through the flutes'. At *ep.* 490.1, we find 'flutes after the lyre' in a context which shows that it is one good thing following another.

20 An allusion to Pheidias' statue of Zeus in the god's temple at Olympia. Pheidias is proverbial for consummate craftsmanship. Acacius is an oratorical Pheidias. Cf. *ep.* 1242.

21 Ulpianus ii, possibly a teacher of rhetoric who taught Macedonius, making them 'companions'.

150. TO EUSTATHIUS

(Sent to Cappadocia, winter 359/60) F123 W123

Libanius sent B150 to the Neoplatonist philosopher Eustathius 1, who was married to Sosipatra, a philosopher in her own right. Eustathius was famed for his eloquence and had participated in the embassy to Persia in 358 along with Libanius' cousin Spectatus 1. On Eustathius and Sosipatra, see the introduction to B6; Eunapius, *Lives of the Sophists* 465–69; Fowden (1982); Penella (1990), 53–62.

Libanius wrote this letter in the winter 359/60 at a time of difficulties, both personal and professional. In August 358, his most intimate friend, Aristaenetos 1, had died in an earthquake. In 359, he lost in rapid succession his friend Eusebios ix, his uncle Phasganius and his mother. His grief was compounded by professional troubles. The death of Phasganius, his chief supporter on the city council, left the field open to their principal rival, Eubulus, who came to dominate the council and 'must prevail in everything', as Libanius complained in another letter written at this period (*ep.* 289.3). Soon after this letter, Helpidius 4 became Praetorian Prefect and slashed Libanius' imperial salary. It was also at about this period, probably in 360 (Norman [2000], 66–69) that the municipal salaries of his assistant teachers were eliminated (*Or.* 31). Here, in the winter of 359/60, we sense the growing confidence of his rivals.

1. Those who say that I fall far short of eloquence say the same thing that I do, but they contradict you. I never believed myself to be an orator, but you never ceased to call me that. 2. If you are 'godlike' (the gods say this is so) and those men fight against your judgement, consider what sort of men they might be. Moreover, I'm amazed at them if they're convinced that in the past I flourished by luck but have now been utterly extinguished by old age, while they don't believe that they themselves, now strutting about after long obscurity, aren't enjoying a bit of luck that will flit away after a little while. 3. Well, none of these remarks can really dig at me, and if I were aggrieved, I'd have a source from which to draw consolation, for such mouths have attacked many men better than I – you and your teacher and his teacher and even his teacher as well.²² 4. So you, as the most distinguished of philosophers, pray to Justice to change their character, while I, as the most perverse of ignoramuses, will ask the same goddess to preserve them in their same attitudes.

²² Libanius alludes to a very distinguished Neoplatonist succession of teachers and students: Plotinus – Porphyry – Iamblichus 1 – Eustathius 1.

151. TO EUDAEMON

(Sent to Elusa, winter 360/1) F255 W258

B151 is addressed to Eudaemon 3 of Pelusium, poet, grammarian (perhaps teacher of rhetoric) and advocate. The Byzantine lexicographer Suidas (*Lexicon*, E.3407) informs us that he wrote various poems and two treatises, one on proper inflexion of nouns (*Techne grammatike*) and one on correct spelling (*Onomatike orthographia*). The latter treatise in particular was influential and frequently cited in the Byzantine period (cf. *RE* 6.885). This treatise, or at least its subject matter, and three of the poems are all mentioned in the current letter, which attests Libanius' avid interest in the correct form and spelling of words in Classical Greek. His Atticism is very strict and he reveals here his genuine appreciation of Eudaemon's expertise in these matters.

Apparently close in age to Libanius and similarly long-lived, Eudaemon was the recipient or subject of ten extant letters, eight of which fall between 357 and 361, when he travelled extensively between Egypt and Constantinople via Elusa and Antioch. On Eudaemon's career and activities, see Kaster (1988), 279.

1. It's an old habit of mine, taking pleasure in Greek words²³ and being convinced that those who don't share this interest do a disservice to rhetoric. In the past, I got discouraged since I didn't have a fellow lover of this study, nor was there anyone ready to share my pursuit in these matters. 2. Before now someone has probably even laughed at me and said that I was concerned about matters no more significant than those said in the comedy to investigate fleas' feet!²⁴ So if some detail in these matters has escaped my notice, I'm hardly surprised – a man cannot cover everything by himself. 3. But since you visited us from Egypt (and may many good things befall the man who imposed that necessity on you, for though he summoned you for a lawsuit, he unwittingly bestowed on our city your eloquence), then indeed I understood even better the old saying that 'when two men go together'²⁵ they're a great boon to one another. 4. Perhaps in this case it's not to 'one another', but simply that you were a great boon to me! My role was always to ask questions, to reply became yours, so that I suppose I even wore you down, as it were, by my incessant queries, some of which were sent to you

23 Lit., the 'words of the Hellenes'. 'Ὅνομα has a range of meanings, 'word', 'name', 'noun'. Libanius means 'words', their correct forms and spelling.

24 In the Thinkery, Socrates sets Chaerephon the task of solving how many flea's feet a flea can jump (Aristophanes, *Clouds* 143–52).

25 Spoken by Diomedes, agreeing to enter the Trojan camp and to capture a Trojan warrior in order to learn the Trojan battle plans, but arguing that he needs a companion (*Iliad* 10.224).

on tablets as you sat with a class of boys,²⁶ others to you at home, as often as not while you were dining. 5. I did this all the time and there was a flurry of questions whenever we encountered one another, for our conversations weren't about income from one's profession, nor food, what we'd eaten or what we intended to eat, nor about who was leaving office and who was taking over. That, to my mind, has nothing to do with the Muses! 6. When I saw you, I would immediately drag you off toward the wicker-booths²⁷ of the workshops and, fastening upon you, I would all but nail you down and draw you into an analysis of names. You would distinguish the spurious from the genuine, advocating for those that had been wrongly dismissed, while rejecting others on the ground that they were prized without justification. The suburbs as well witnessed the self-same conduct on my part, where we would sit and wait for officials returning from abroad²⁸ and we'd have something to work on. 7. To recount everything would be the task of Apollo, who can count even sand,²⁹ but rest assured that you've gratified both me and the god when you allow us to say 'O Herakleis' when we invoke the god, despite the fact that someone of no mean reputation always said that it was necessary to delete the iota unless one was complaining indignantly, and though he didn't completely deny him [Heracles] this letter, he didn't permit us to invoke the god with this letter, but you have produced three forms of invocation, of which two are [permitted] to us [orators], while none of them is inaccessible to the poets, since they are borne aloft on wings.³⁰ Expect some other good thing from him – you know what great gifts Heracles

26 Eudaemon normally resided in Elusa, where he was both a teacher and an advocate, but here we learn that he taught in Antioch for a few months in 360.

27 A *recherché* allusion to the wicker-work booths or barriers found in the Classical Athenian agora, but not at Antioch in Libanius' day, cf. Demosthenes, *Or.* 18.169.

28 An allusion to the presence of the city's teachers at the *adventus* ceremonies held for high officials outside the city gates, Liebeschuetz (1972), 208ff.

29 A Delphic oracle to King Croesus of Lydia began, 'I know the number of grains of sand...' (Herodotus 1.47.2).

30 The name 'Heracles' in Greek has many forms, depending on case ending, literary genre and dialect. In Attic, ὦ Ἡράκλεις or simply Ἡράκλεις is the conventional vocative as well as a common interjection of surprise, anger or indignation, like the English 'Good God!' An unnamed critic claimed that Ἡράκλεις with the iota was only permissible in an invocation of indignant complaint (σχετλιάζειν). It was an incorrect vocative form in other contexts. By contrast, Eudaemon argued that three forms of invocation existed, that is, the vocative form could be in three types of oath or invocation of the god. Two of these, says Libanius, are open 'to us', presumably prose writers, while all three were correct in the poets. LSJ attests three uses of the vocative oath: surprise, anger or indignation. Two uses are attested in the Byzantine lexicographer Suidas, *Lexicon* E.469 (indignant complaint), 470 (surprise).

granted even before his journey to heaven!³¹ 8. After praising your skill concerning words, someone else might have gone away without seeing anything else, but, in my view, the benefit you supply through teaching is no greater than the pleasure you give through the beauty [of your art]. 9. Your beautiful works are from both Italy and Aetolia,³² from the latter through ‘The Picture’³³ and ‘Deeds Done in Wine’,³⁴ from the former through ‘Saved by the Works of Euripides’.³⁵ Indeed, it seems that I see men who were cowering and trembling radiant and encouraged at your hymns. For my part, by Athena, I rejoice that Euripides, in my view – and you know how worked up I get about him as a poet! – through his plays preserved the spirits of his fellow citizens who had met with misfortune. 10. You seem to me to cite him alone not because you can’t cite others too on the same themes, but simply, by introducing my favourite author alone, to give me pleasure in this way, too. You’ve done something similar to the man who, when asked for a drink of any sort by the thirsty man, gave him Thasian wine because he knew that he was exceedingly fond of it.³⁶ That was simultaneously to quench his thirst and to do so with greater pleasure. 11. So are you not truly blessed for having searched out such things and having made gifts of them, more blessed even than Anthemion and Ischomachus for their great wealth or Nicias for the number of his slaves?³⁷ May it be my fate to track down such things, though I have only one Daos!³⁸

31 An allusion to Heracles’ twelve labours, interpreted as benefactions for mankind.

32 We do not know enough about Eudaemon’s travels, literal or metaphorical, to understand the references. Rome seems an obvious destination, Aetolia is more puzzling.

33 Sophists of the Second Sophistic had popularised elaborate descriptions of works of art. The best-known example is Philostratus’ *Pictures*, consisting of a series of artful descriptions of paintings he claims to have seen in an art gallery in Naples.

34 A work on a Dionysiac theme.

35 Plutarch, *Life of Nicias* 29, reports of the Athenian captives at Syracuse (415 BC) that ‘some were saved through Euripides’, in that they gained their freedom by being able to recite passages of this favourite poet of the Sicilians. Euripides was also the most anthologised of the tragedians and there were in antiquity, as today, more fragments of Euripides than of any other tragedian. The context suggests that Eudaemon composed a poem with moral instruction culled exclusively from Euripidean material. Libanius is delighted, since for him Euripides is a favourite author. Cf. Norman (1964), 163–64 (depth of knowledge of Euripidean drama).

36 Wine from Thasos was proverbially good, cf. Aristophanes, *Wealth* 1021.

37 Anthemion, a ‘man of property and good sense’ (Plato, *Meno* 90a), was the father of the Anytus who brought Socrates to trial. Ischomachus, a wealthy ‘gentleman’ (καλός τε καγαθός), is featured in Xenophon’s *Oeconomicus* 6.17ff. The Athenian general Nicias had vast wealth in the silver mines of Laurium and in slaves (Plutarch, *Life of Nicias* 4.1–3).

38 A stock name for slaves in Menander’s comedies. Libanius probably has in mind *Dyscolus* 206–11, where Daos, slave of the poor farmer Gorgias, curses their poverty.

152. TO FORTUNATIANUS

(September/October 361) F650 W564

Between 357 and 365, Libanius wrote 11 letters to Fortunatianus 1, a poet, philosopher and committed Hellene, who also appears to have been a courtier of some influence under Constantius, Julian and Jovian. He held no identifiable office between 355 and 365, but he is credited with having had Aristophanes of Corinth appointed an imperial courier (*Or.* 14.2) and Libanius holds him responsible for fending off an attack against himself during the anti-pagan reaction in 363 (B154). It is questionable whether the Fortunatianus who served as *comes rei privatae* from 370 to 377 is the same man. B152–53 were written in autumn 361 under the cloud of the approaching civil war between Constantius and Julian.

1. You seem to have good servants by halves, since they know perfectly well to whom they must give letters from you, but not even under compulsion would they take the replies to carry back to you! 2. For my part, I immediately responded to your first letter and I ordered the servant to take it, but he said that he would be staying on for a while, that there was no rush and that he would absolutely not be such a rascal as to want to show me to be lazy and to irritate you. 3. Such were the remarks he made. A second letter came when Celsus³⁹ arrived in the midst of our exchange of letters. He heard from me about that other letter of mine,⁴⁰ but he himself took this one at the baths around noonday, for my headache imposes such a routine on me. 4. I'm amazed if you call my release from the boys 'leisure', like a fellow not keeping in mind that my vacation from the boys in itself propels other people my way, nor is it at all possible to beat a retreat from them; to the contrary, I'm obliged to step lively or appear to be a scoundrel. 5. Just as one of the two peaks mentioned in Homer is shrouded in constant cloud at its crown,⁴¹ that's what the continual press of business is like for me! But, as for you, if your trees⁴² really are perfectly adequate in my stead, consider to yourself whether it's noble that they're perfectly adequate. But if the 'plane tree of the Mede'⁴³ comes second to your friends, then show it by action.

39 Celsus 3, Libanius' close friend who became governor of Cilicia in 362, governor of Syria in 363–64 and Syriarch in 364.

40 The undelivered letter in the possession of Fortunatianus' servant.

41 The two peaks are the dwelling places of Scylla and Charybdis, cf. Homer, *Odyssey* 12.73ff.

42 Life in the country.

43 While on the march towards Greece, Xerxes admires a plane tree, orders it decorated with gold and assigns one of the Immortals (= crack Persian troops) to guard it (Herodotus 7.31).

153. TO FORTUNATIANUS

(September/October 361) F661 W575

In B153 Libanius again protests that he had replied to Fortunatianus and again pins the blame on the dilatory servant. The letter was written in September/October 361 when civil war between Constantius and Julian was fast approaching. Libanius speaks of his fear in the circumstances, the imprudence of revealing one's thoughts publicly, and his desire to have a close friend like Fortunatianus at his side so that he can speak frankly.

1. 'Let earth and broad heaven above now know this' (and I'll add, if you like, Styx and the other gods),⁴⁴ that letter was sent at the appropriate time and nothing was done by contrivance. 2. Perhaps it's not right for you to spare your servants against your friends and to entangle the latter in an accusation in order to absolve the former of blame. 3. But we'll dispute about these things a little later, with Celsus⁴⁵ casting his vote, but know that, in my view, you've made the Bacchic revel⁴⁶ duller by your absence, for there's no one I might speak to from the heart, but either I must be silent or, after speaking, repent and censure my tongue because it chattered on about what was 'better unspoken'.⁴⁷ I imagine that the same thing has enveloped you as well – silence or fear. 4. So that we might enjoy one another, I you and you me, and each enjoy freedom through one another, do open the gates for our discussion by making an appearance.

154. TO FORTUNATIANUS

(Carried by Philippus 3 to court, end of 363) F1425 W1147

At *Or.* 1.138, Libanius reports that, during the anti-pagan reaction of 363, a 'barbarian', that is, a military officer, tried to incite the emperor Jovian against him, on the grounds that he 'never ceased to bewail the fate of the fallen Julian'. Jovian was incensed with Libanius, but was dissuaded from acting against him by a 'Cappadocian, a good fellow and an old schoolmate'. It has long been assumed that the man who interceded at court on his behalf was Fortunatianus, whose assistance is

44 An echo of Hera's oath to Zeus that she is not responsible for Poseidon's presence on the plains of Troy, contrary to Zeus' will (*Iliad* 15.36).

45 Cf. B152.3.

46 An allusion to Antioch's harvest festival for Dionysus, cf. Liebeschuetz (1972), 231 n. 6.

47 Feigning high spirits from wine, Odysseus, disguised as a beggar, speaks to Eumaeus what was 'better unspoken' and tells a lying tale of events at Troy (*Odyssey* 14.466).

alluded to in the opening of B154. Libanius requests that Fortunatianus intervene on behalf of the poet Philippus 3, a committed Hellene who is under attack in the anti-pagan reaction. On Philippus, see B104.

1. That cloud passed by and it's not unclear who lent assistance, saying much and doing more. You have this second task, no less fitting than the first, to receive the noble Philippus graciously, and to inform the excellent Salutius⁴⁸ what sort of man he is, from what family, and to elaborate on the well-springs in his soul, which you can't but admire, since you yourself have similar ones. 2. So rich and varied is the swarm of words that resides in you that, if Philippus were ranked among orators by us, you as an orator would be obliged for that very reason to help him, since you have acquired the power of oratory. But since he is, among poets, the one dearest to the Muses, and, in truth, has taken his inspiration⁴⁹ from them, again for this reason you've come under obligation to help, in that you as a poet will be at one with a poet. 3. He is moreover one of those who sacrificed a great deal when it was possible, and now he has been caught round the middle by those who were pained when he sacrificed, so it will be noble to defend him for that reason, too, so that you won't, by falling short, bring pleasure to the enemies of the temples. 4. So examine the case privately at home, leaving no legal stone unturned, and let this be clear to the lawyers, whomever he chooses, that they will gain a reward from him, and they'll be doing you a favour.

155. TO ALEXANDRA

(Sent to Cilicia, July/August 362) F734 W645

Alexandra (*PLRE* 44) was the sister of Calliopius 3, an assistant-teacher to Libanius, and wife of Seleucus 1, an intimate friend of both Libanius and Julian, cf. B23. She was a cultivated woman and much admired by Libanius, as emerges here and in the high praise of her in *ep.* 696 to Celsus 3, governor of Cilicia in 362. While Seleucus was on imperial business in Euphratensis in 361 (*ep.* 695/B124), she remained in Antioch to give birth to their first child in summer or early autumn. After Constantius' death, the family went to live in Cilicia, where Seleucus renewed his acquaintance with Julian in June 363 and where he received an office, possibly High Priest of Cilicia. In the current letter, written after the court has arrived in Antioch in July, Libanius laments the fact that the family did not come to Antioch with the

48 Secundus Salutius 3, Praetorian Prefect of the East (361–65 and 365–67).

49 Literally, 'branch', an allusion to the branch given to Hesiod by the Muses when they inspired him with the gift of song on Mt Helicon (*Theogony* 29ff.). Cf. *ep.* 408.1.

emperor. He thanks Alexandra for the slaves she sent as a gift, but bemoans the fact that they arrived without an accompanying letter. On Alexandra, see Schouler (1985), 129–33.

Seleucus accompanied Julian on the Persian campaign, but was prosecuted in the post-Julianic reaction, heavily fined and banished (*ep.* 1508/N142). He had intended to compose a history of the Persian expedition.

1. Just as last year I was distressed by all my affairs apart from a single one – and you know that single one, for whenever I came to you and conversed with you, I considered it a holiday – so now I’m happy with everything and irked with just one thing, that you’ve not returned. 2. Yet, when I heard that the worthy Seleucus had been awarded the belt of office,⁵⁰ I expected that he would accompany the emperor, that you would accompany him and that I would see once again the woman who, as Homer said, is ‘like unto the goddesses’.⁵¹ When I was mistaken about that⁵² and grew despondent, a certain old man presented himself to me as I was engaged in my usual pursuits, informed me from whom he was coming and that he was bringing slaves as a gift. 3. The gift didn’t seem to me to be unusual, for I have many things of yours, and, in fact, the fellow who serves as pedagogue to my illegitimate son is still called, even today, ‘Seleucus’ slave’. I thought that something ought to have been added to the gift better than the gift itself, namely, your letter! 4. When the slaves were brought in, but no letter appeared, I took the gift even so, but there was no pleasure, not as much as there would have been if a letter had been added as well. 5. If you’ve become negligent towards me after the birth, then bid your daughter help her mother and write. May the gods allow me to write such things concerning sons of yours, too!⁵³

156. TO HIERAX

(Sent to Alexandria Troas, spring 363) F796 W706

By spring 363, Libanius was known as a man of great influence at court, which naturally produced a flood of requests for assistance. B156 reveals him on the

50 Seleucus did not, after all, take up a high office (*arche*), but accepted instead a high priesthood, probably in Cilicia. He accompanied Julian on the Persian expedition. Cf. *ep.* 770/N92 on the priesthood.

51 Said by Priam of Helen at *Iliad* 3.158.

52 Julian arrived in Antioch on 17 July 362. This letter was written after that date.

53 Alexandra gave birth to her first child, a daughter, in 361, cf. *ep.* 802/N98 (March 363), alluding to Seleucus’ ‘beloved daughter’. Here Libanius prays for sons, too.

defensive, accused by Hierax, a pagan priest in Alexandria Troas (near Troy), of having failed to write or offer help. Libanius protests that he had four times mentioned Hierax to important people, including the emperor, and that an imperial letter had been dispatched, albeit belatedly. Libanius' awkward defence is a concession that Hierax had not been well treated. He is an example of a committed Hellene who hoped for advancement under Julian, but who was having trouble promoting his interests at court. Within a few months, Julian would be dead and Hellenes such as Hierax might feel relief that they had not played more conspicuous roles in the pagan revival.

1. I was astonished at how you thought my not having written to you to be worthy of an indictment, and yet, you give me no credit for the fact that the emperor's letter has reached you. 2. By divulging what was written by you to me (I've done this four times now) and by raising the cry that the Troad and Alexander and the god along with them would suffer if we shouldn't honour Hierax in the customary way,⁵⁴ saying things of that sort now to Helpidius,⁵⁵ now to our emperor excellent in all things, I contrived that a letter appropriate to you arrive. 3. I'm not saying that the emperor granted this as a favour to me. On the contrary, he knows you well, esteems you and wished to see you. But in the press of business, even a lover might be less keen on his beloved. Certainly, what he needed was someone to prompt him and not allow him to forget, which is exactly what was done by me. 4. But somehow it turned out that the man summoning you mentioned to me afterwards that he'd summoned you, and though I praised his action, I wasn't able to write. It wasn't right to cast blame if someone who must take counsel for the whole earth and sea has passed over some small matter unwittingly. 5. So you yourself forgive me for not having heard of this matter immediately, and don't think that my schoolwork is so greatly honoured by me that, for the sake of it, I prefer to wrong my friends. For if I'd been less than adequate for both tasks, certainly I wouldn't have been neglectful of the noble Hierax while chattering away about Miltiades or Themistocles!⁵⁶

54 'Honour... in the customary way' implies a political appointment, but that does not appear to have happened.

55 Helpidius 6, who was with Julian in Gaul and converted by him to worship of the old gods (*Orr.* 14.35; 18.125). He was among the inner circle at Julian's court and served as *comes rei privatae* in 362–63. Jovian made him Proconsul of Asia in 364. He rallied to Procopius in 365 and was imprisoned and his property confiscated. Cf. *epp.* 35/N38 (praise of Helpidius to Julian), 758/N95 (Helpidius confirms favour done for Aristophanes), 1120/N113 (congratulations on post under Jovian), 1180/N125 (request to help Celsus 3).

56 Athenian statesmen of the 5th century BC.

157. TO HIERAX

(Sent to Alexandria Troas, spring 363) F1352 W1212

B157 is a typical ‘school letter’, requesting that the priest Hierax (cf. B156) enquire into a student’s family situation, since they neither provide the boy with enough money nor do they even write to him. The letter closes with encouragement to Hierax as a pagan priest to enlist the aid of the governor of the Hellespont and the *vicarius* of Asia in promoting the ‘restoration’ of the temples.

1. We have among us a youth from the Troad, well-mannered and worthy in every way, and although he took up rhetoric late, he did it with passion. Maybe he’d heard the well-known adage, how much better it is to learn late than never!⁵⁷ His name is Rufinus, but he is neglected by his kin, who, apart from overlooking him in other respects, don’t even write to him. 2. Make it your task to inquire into these people and their motive, and if you find them neglectful, reprove them and set them in action, but if you find them wronging him because they lack the means to help, then you be his helper. 3. You lead Alexander’s city with willing subjects, and you have influence with both governors, the one who has the Hellespont and the one above him in charge of many peoples,⁵⁸ so that if any help from governors is needed for the restoration,⁵⁹ you’ll prevail through them as well.

158. TO GAIUS

(Sent to Cilicia, 363) F826 W738

B158 is addressed to Gaius i, a Cilician poet connected to the clan of Acacius 7, Demetrius 2 and Julianus 14. At Acacius’ urging, Gaius’ nephew, Gaius ii, entered Libanius’ school in 362, but withdrew in the following year due to severe headaches (*ep.* 1371). Prior to his departure, however, the uncle had composed a poem in praise of Libanius. Here Libanius responds with some embarrassment to the panegyric he has received.

1. Your poem is in praise of a skilful orator, but when I searched within myself for those many, great qualities, I found none of them. It helped me to learn what one might do to become a good writer, but I’m among those who produce trifles. 2. If I don’t seem that way to you, it’s no wonder, since

57 Cf. Plato, *Republic* 8.566b.

58 Hierax ‘leads’ the city as a pagan priest, who can rely on the governor of the Hellespont and the *vicarius* of Asia to give him the support he needs in the restoration of pagan cult.

59 The restoration of pagan cult under Julian.

friendship by its nature deceives. For that reason, I was very surprised at the men to whom I showed the encomium, for they departed saying repeatedly that they had seen the passion of the poet for the orator. 3. For my part, I don't know what to do. If I should conceal such beautiful verses, I'll wrong their creator. If I show them around, I'll provoke laughter for presuming that I am myself contained in them. 4. Well, I'll see to it that I dishonour neither you nor me. In bestowing a crown on Eudaemon⁶⁰ first, you did what I would have done, if I were a poet. For the man would be likely to repay you in the same coin, a poem for a poem. Quite simply, people have a habit of considering those who are more like them more important than those who are less so. 5. So I feel gratitude for being honoured – I'm not calculating who got honoured first.

159. TO ACACIUS

(Sent to Cappadocia, 365) F1458 W1071

B159 is addressed to Acacius 8, the *comes domorum per Cappadociam* to whom Libanius also wrote B99–103 and 105. He writes on behalf of a High Priest of Athens named Lemmatius, who came under attack in the reaction after Julian's death. Libanius had met him in Athens and renewed the acquaintance in 365 when he visited Antioch and recounted, among other things, the loyalty of Athens to Julian's memory. The current letter implies that Lemmatius had been attacked by a man who was hostile to Acacius as well, which accounts in part for Libanius' reliance on Acacius for help. *Ep.* 1526 from later in the year makes clear that Acacius did in fact intervene and he successfully 'freed' Lemmatius 'from chains'.

1. Of all men I hate slanderers most, having been harmed by those who do this, and yet I almost feel gratitude towards them, in that they showed me once more the noble Lemmatius.⁶¹ At his appearance, I recalled my great good fortune of old, how I arrived in Theseus' Athens,⁶² how it was then evening, and I recalled the bath, the dinner, and the conversation at dinner, and how some gave chase, but the bird belonged to others.⁶³ 2. I also rejoiced

60 Eudaemon 3 of Pelusium, poet, grammarian (perhaps teacher of rhetoric) and advocate, cf. *ep.* 255/B151. Gaius wrote a poem about him before the poem about Libanius.

61 I follow Foerster in reading 'Lemmatius'. Seeck, *BLZG* 111 adopts Wolf's conjecture of 'Clematius' and identifies him as Clematius iii.

62 Alluding to the Athenian hero, King Theseus.

63 The expression looks proverbial, like 'some sow, while others reap', but it is not attested elsewhere. In the *Autobiography* (*Or.* 1.16), Libanius reports that the pupils of Diophantus would not release him until he agreed to be Diophantus' pupil and Eunapius, *Lives of the*

as I looked upon him steeped in sacred rites and concourse with the gods. Indeed, his voice was a pure stream, like the voice of the man from Pylos,⁶⁴ and he was noble as he grieved for the very man⁶⁵ I did, the man who left the earth an orphan. He announced that the entire city was like that, and may some boon come to them from Zeus, in that Athens honours the departed one as much in death as it did in life. 3. This great city even did a dance, and their chorus-leader caused you pain when you were present and pursued you when you were gone.⁶⁶ May that man not cease to be swamped by trouble! But the leader of the priests of Athena⁶⁷ is returning to you unharmed, as was right, having found an ally, I think, just as formerly Heracles did.⁶⁸

160. TO ARION

(Sent to Ancyra, spring 364) F1165 W1098

B160 is a good example of how Libanius writes to a father about his son's work in school. It is addressed to Arion, a philosopher of Ancyra whose son Agathius entered Libanius' school in 362 (*ep.* 728). In the spring of 364, Libanius wrote this evaluation of his progress.

1. In order that you not be unaware of what you've got, rest assured that your son is flourishing in his rhetorical studies and has such a character that I wish the gods would give me ten such as him,⁶⁹ not to sack an enemy city, but that my chorus might be honoured for the excellent youths nurtured in it. 2. Up to this day, Agathius has been the source of no unpleasantness, either for teachers or fellow students, and he has often been the source of pleasure for many, so that some look at him as a son, others as a brother, one who has acquired a good reputation by his actions and who doesn't quarrel unless

Sophists 495 confirms that Libanius was trapped. The hunting theme may allude to that episode, but its precise meaning is unclear. Are the hunters the pupils of the rival sophist who searched for Libanius in vain, while he, the prey, belonged to Diophantus' crew? The account at *Or.* 1.16 is much less enthusiastic about the arrival in Athens.

64 King Nestor, famed for long-windedness, cf. *Iliad* 1.249.

65 The emperor Julian.

66 'This great city' is Antioch, which 'did a dance' following Julian's death, cf. *epp.* 1220.2/N120, 1430/N116, Theodoret, *Ecclesiastical History* 3.28. The 'chorus-leader', presumably an influential Christian, cannot be identified, but he may be the same enemy who blocked Acacius 8 from securing a post in late 363, cf. *ep.* 1174.4/B102 (spring 364).

67 A non-technical phrase denoting a high priesthood of Athena.

68 Heracles found an ally in Athena for his labours, in Theseus after he had killed his family.

69 Cf. *Iliad* 2.372.

someone should praise him. Nevertheless, he possesses strength and he would be able to instil fear by it, if he wished to, but he loves living in peace even more than the weaklings. 3. For these reasons, I rejoice when he enters and I'm delighted when he speaks. Some of them are not bad at speaking, but their characters are so poor and they're so arrogant in causing others pain, that whenever they appear I curse my profession.⁷⁰

161. TO NICOCLES

(Sent to Constantinople, spring 364) F1196 W1142

Like Libanius, the grammarian Nicocles came under attack in the period after Julian's death. In B161 Libanius reassures Nicocles that he remains unchanged in his loyalty to Julian's memory and defends himself against the charge, perhaps made only obliquely, that he is too ready to have friendly relations with men hostile to the Hellenes. Libanius prided himself on his capacity for friendship with a wide variety of people. Eunapius, *Lives of the Sophists* 496 says of Libanius, 'Those who pursued modes of life directly opposed to one another would applaud in him qualities that were directly opposed, and everyone without exception was convinced that it was his views that Libanius admired, so multiform was he, so completely all things to all men'. That character trait had obviously bothered Nicocles as well (cf. §3).

B161 was one of seven letters carried to Constantinople (*epp.* 1193–99) in spring 364 by the grammarian Alexander 9/v, regarded by Libanius as a reliable messenger.

1. You could learn from Alexander what my situation is, but he wasn't able to tell me about your circumstances. So you become his teacher concerning your own situation; certainly, even if affairs in the human realm are difficult for you, nonetheless the gods are propitious (that's a much finer thing), the gods with whom you prevailed against people here as well when they gave you trouble. 2. Don't think of me as a timeserver, or a Euripus or the wind's plaything because of the changes that have occurred.⁷¹ If I were criticising your conduct or praising those whom I blamed before, I would really and truly be subject to the proverbs, but if I maintain my former conduct, and I'm

⁷⁰ For commentary on students, cf. *ep.* 666/B77.

⁷¹ Proverbial expressions for those who blow with the prevailing wind. A 'timeserver' is 'kothornos', literally, the high boot worn by tragic actors. The boots were worn interchangeably on left or right foot (cf. the politician Theramenes called 'Kothornos' by Xenophon, *History of Greece* 2.3.31). The Euripus was a narrow strait separating Euboea and Boeotia with particularly violent tidal ebbs and flows. Hence, the word was proverbial for inconstancy and flux (cf. Plato, *Phaedo* 90c; *ep.* 618). The 'wind's plaything' is of course like the English expression. Themistius, *Or.* 5.67d uses Kothornos and the Euripus together.

disposed to live in peace and happy to help those who have done harm, forgive me, by Zeus, for my feelings, or rather, abide by the mercy you granted in the past. 3. Already back then you knew that I thought I ought to help those by whom I'd been treated badly, and you called philanthropy of that sort harmful to the one who indulged in it, but since you weren't able to prevent it, you were nonetheless my friend.⁷² You were also aware that you yourself had got back on speaking terms with many men after long animosities, men whom you couldn't bring yourself to praise, but whom you were persuaded not to call enemies. In many instances, the situation persuaded you, while in others it compelled you. 4. Then events quickly produced some evidence that we had in fact judged correctly. To write clearly about such things is perilous, but you have Alexander and you'll not make a false step.⁷³ You will pray with him, if you don't have any influence ready to hand, and you'll take action with him, if the power is there. O gods, may it be the latter case!

162. TO SILANUS

(Carried by Clematius to Constantinople, winter 355/6) F433 W1240

Silanus 1, a teacher of law in Constantinople, received six letters between 355 and 357. B162 suggests that he wanted an imperial post in 355, but lacked the patronage of Dionysius, an official whom he hopes to win over through the efforts of Libanius. The latter, however, protests his complete lack of influence with Dionysius, itself an interesting admission, but he encourages Silanus to come to Antioch to teach law there, also interesting in light of Libanius' later intense hostility to the incursion of legal studies on rhetoric.

1. If I had written earlier that I hadn't much influence with Dionysius,⁷⁴ perhaps I wouldn't have been believed and for that reason I didn't write, but now might be the moment to confirm this weakness, since Clematius⁷⁵ will

72 Cf. *Or.* 1.74 (speaking of the early 350s): 'My reputation had increased and countless were the tongues that praised me, though there were some who asserted that I associated with people whom Apollo would have deemed unworthy....'

73 It was imprudent even in normal circumstances to make compromising statements in a letter, which might well be opened en route to its destination or shared around semi-publicly by the recipient. Trusted letter-carriers conveyed the writer's private thoughts, as Alexander will here.

74 Dionysius 3, attested only here. *PLRE* infers that he was governor of Syria in 355, or perhaps a prominent *principalis*.

75 Libanius' friend Clematius 2, an imperial courier (354–57) and governor of Phoenicia (357).

persuade you that I'm not lying. 2. So rest assured that I haven't even advanced my own interests, and that any of my friends who wanted to achieve anything through me realised it was not the right path and have taken another, since the only thing I can do is greet him by name. 3. If I had some influence and you weren't benefiting from it, I'd be in the wrong, but since I'm without influence, forgive me. What I'm capable of, you are as well. Give up the path involving a more exalted rank,⁷⁶ for hankering after such things is unworthy of your spirit, but come here, however you can, and put my wit to the test, whether it recollects its wings. 4. Things are more 'winged' here⁷⁷ and those who will marvel at your abilities are legion. Further, there ought to be a teacher of law for the boys. This awaits you, as I've prevented another from occupying the post.

163. TO DOMNIO

(Carried by Artemon to Berytus, 356) F533 W447

B163–67. During Libanius' lifetime, there was increasing pressure on advocates to possess knowledge of Roman law, which had applied, at least in theory, to all inhabitants of the empire since the early third century. Most advocates were trained only in rhetoric and would consult a lawyer on the technicalities of the law, but Libanius was obliged to write letters of reference for an increasing number of young men who wished to supplement their rhetorical training with study of law at Berytus, an old Roman colony and long a centre for legal study. Knowledge of the law would enhance a man's career as an advocate and it might help his prospects of securing a post as an assessor, itself an important step on the path to securing a governorship. In some cases, boys curtailed their rhetorical studies in order to study law, but in other instances men in their twenties or thirties who were practising advocates decided to study at Berytus. Hilarinus in B164 and Apringius in B166–67 are examples of this phenomenon and elicit from Libanius quips about old men returning to school.

Later in the 380s, Libanius grew deeply antagonised by this desire to study at Berytus, which was accompanied by increasing pressure for ambitious officials to know Latin. Study of the law and Latin were rivals to the monopoly long held by Greek rhetoric, and Libanius saw in them an unacceptable assault by Roman power on the Greek way of life. In the correspondence of the 350s, however, he was self-confident about his own position and remained on excellent terms with several professors of law, including Domnio 1 (or Domninus in the mss), to whom he wrote many letters of reference. Three are included here. On the rival studies, see Liebeschuetz (1972), 242–55.

⁷⁶ Don't pursue imperial office, or, perhaps, entry into the senate in Constantinople.

⁷⁷ There is more respect for eloquence at Antioch than at Constantinople.

B163 was written for Artemon (otherwise unknown), an Antiochene who had studied rhetoric with a rival sophist. He has heard of Libanius' friendship with Domnio and has requested a letter of introduction. Libanius graciously obliges.

1. This Artemon⁷⁸ is a fellow citizen of mine, though a student of the other fellows – never did he not regret those 'others'. Nonetheless, it was his lot to study with others, but to admire me, though circumstances, luck, and his imminent departure did not allow him to achieve his goals. 2. Nonetheless, he is ranked by me among those who attended my lectures, since he shared the attitude of those who did. When he approached me and told me where he was going and the purpose of his journey, I praised him, added my prayer for him and pointed out a haven. 3. I did the young man the favour of sending him to the right person – now you teach him as you do the others, but look upon him more favourably than the others, that everyone may know how great my standing is with you.

164. TO DOMNIO

(Carried by Hilarinus to Berytus, summer 361) F653 W567

The Hilarinus of B164 was a Greek from Euboea who had been practising advocacy for some years (*ep.* 652). In 361, he resolved, despite his age, to study with Domnio to acquire specialised knowledge of Roman law. In Libanius' view, he needs an intensive course.

1. Look, you've even roused Greece to your side, and, in addition to the boys, you've all but persuaded even old men to come on the run to Phoenicia.⁷⁹ This Hilarinus⁸⁰ previously desired to get something from my course, but was prevented by fortune and is now coming to participate in yours. 2. You really ought to be to him as I myself would have been, had he participated in my daily exercises. I'm talking not about goodwill, which you clearly display at all times, but rather that he learn a lot in not much time. To those who come late to their studies and who endure ribbing, it's appropriate that this be their reward from their teachers: intensive lessons and an enthusiasm that instils speed in their art.

⁷⁸ Otherwise unknown.

⁷⁹ On 'old men' studying law, see Introduction to B163.

⁸⁰ Mentioned only in *ep.* 652 to Anatolius 4, governor of Phoenicia in 361, and *ep.* 653/B164. He is not included in *BLZG* or *PLRE*.

165. TO DOMNIO

(Sent to Berytus, spring 364) F1131 W1160

B165 is a lukewarm letter of introduction for an unnamed youth who wishes to cut short his rhetorical studies to go to Berytus. The brevity of the note and the anonymity of the youth suggest that he was not from a prominent family. I include it precisely because it sheds light on the difficulties faced by boys who were not well-connected as they tried to advance themselves.

1. Receive this other pupil from the troupe surrounding me, a worthy lad, well-born, a craftsman of eloquence,⁸¹ and from a father who was rich in the past, but now possesses few things, though he is constantly praised, and who is raising just this one son. 2. For that reason, may it be your very great concern to fill the boy as quickly as possible with the law, so that a lengthy period of study may not cause pain to his old father, since he can look to no other assistance.

166. TO DOMNIO

(Carried by Apringius to Berytus, spring 364) F1171 W1124

The Antiochene decurion Apringius (*PLRE* 86) had been a student of Libanius, probably in Constantinople (*ep.* 150/N62), before being summoned home to Antioch in 355 to become an advocate, as his father had been (*ep.* 422). After nine years of practice, he decided to study law at Berytus and presented this letter of introduction to Domnio in spring 364. Apparently, he had met with financial misfortune, since he is said here to be poor, scarcely able to pay fees, whereas the family had spent lavishly in civic benefactions for Antioch (*ep.* 150/N62).

1. Behold, you've even persuaded men to do what boys do. My companion Apringius, in any event, after many circuits around the tribunal, is now coming to acquire knowledge of the law, since it's possible to acquire laws from you, and I don't believe he could get hold of the merchandise⁸² otherwise. 2. Against those who try to tease him, he'll have an ally in Socrates, who went in old age to a music teacher.⁸³ For my sake, cut his course as short as possible, so that he may acquire what [normally] takes more time. 3. I

81 A phrase borrowed from Aeschines, *Or.* 1.170.

82 There is an edge to Libanius' tone here. He would never call traditional *paideia* 'merchandise' (*emporía*).

83 Allusions to Socrates as a late learner: *epp.* 379.7, 652 (on the Hilarinus of B164).

would have thought it proper to say something about fees as well, that he's a good man, but poor, and even if he isn't able to give, he knows how to remember a favour at least – if I hadn't long been aware that this is your established 'law' for the boys.

167. TO MEGETHIUS

(Sent to Berytus, spring 364) F1203 W1123

Megethius 2, an Antiochene advocate with traditional rhetorical training, was in Berytus on unknown business when he received this letter on behalf of the Apringius for whom Libanius wrote B139 and 166.

1. I'll be amazed if I'm not myself one of those racing off to Berytus! That's where children and grown men and old men too are sailing and walking and flying, since some notion has triumphed, I presume, that an advocate is powerless who doesn't drink from that source. 2. Yet many examples are at odds with that notion – your own most of all. In league with Demosthenes,⁸⁴ you attacked those who carry about their great satchels⁸⁵ and saved those seeking refuge with you. Nonetheless, neither can you persuade [anyone by your example] nor can any of the others. 3. Be that as it may, Apringius, who is very dear to me, has arrived in order to toil at the boys' tasks; I presume you'll show enthusiasm for him, teasing him at the start, but after that looking to see how he might get what he desires in the best possible way.

168. TO SALUTIUS

(Sent to ?Constantinople, April 364) F1224 W1143

Arsenius 2, a prominent *principalis* and advocate at Antioch, made a bid for a governorship in 364, but was unsuccessful, allegedly because Libanius had counselled Arsenius to engage in some tactic that was regarded in high places as presumptuous and over-bold. Pained and embarrassed, Libanius wrote to the Praetorian Prefect Secundus Salutius 3 and one of his assessors, Callistio, to shift the blame on to himself and to request that Arsenius receive a governorship. The episode is instructive for two reasons. First, it reveals that Libanius retained influence after Julian's death and was consulted for political advice because of his connections at court. It suggests too that his political judgement could be flawed. Second, Libanius concedes that not all prefects would have either the influence or the will to effect so many appointments of men of *paideia*, as Salutius has done (§5).

84 By means of traditional training in the Attic orators, especially Demosthenes.

85 Leather pouches stuffed with documents on Roman law (see note on B86.2).

Arsenius 2 was from one of Antioch's most distinguished families. Along with two brothers and a sister, he was arrested and tried at Scythopolis in 359, but apparently went free (cf. *ep.* 37/N49, for intercession with Modestus 2, the *comes* presiding over the trial). Both he and his brother, Antiochus ii, were old schoolmates of Libanius and the latter was *agonothete* of the Olympic games in Antioch in 356. Antiochus' son, Arsenius 3, was Libanius' student and treated as a prominent *principalis* already in a speech from 361 when he was still being 'nurtured in the groves of the Muses', that is, when he was still a student with Libanius (*Or.* 31.47). This younger Arsenius died in 364 soon after B168 was written (*ep.* 1260). Libanius would intercede again with Salutius 3 for Arsenius 2 in early 365, cf. *ep.* 1474.

1. I recall that old favour of yours when Olympius was trembling lest his brother become one of the city councillors; I described his fear to you and immediately it was dispelled, when the man who was expecting the council's net was instead summoned to office.⁸⁶ We began to admire you at the very moment we began to know you, and friendship followed admiration. That act of assistance whereby we weren't proved weaker than those dragging him off doesn't allow even our own parents to be ranked ahead of your own dear self. 3. Now that well-deserved honours have come to you from the emperors,⁸⁷ and every mouth has but one task, to admire your affairs, we surpass all men in our pleasure at these things. 4. You have other noble characteristics, since what derives from a cultivated soul cannot but partake of nobility, but the noblest thing of all was what you knew how to do for those who defend the victims of injustice, when you placed on the governors' thrones men whose sweat and toil you'd recognised while on your own throne.⁸⁸ 5. Whereas two or three men arriving at such high rank seemed a great thing and whereas prefects were praised who could do this or, at any rate, who wished to,⁸⁹ you brought in and set an orator over each province, rescuing the cities through the experience of the overseers, granting to some of them rewards for their long toils, and bringing happiness to the affairs of teachers in other ways.⁹⁰ 6. For some time now, men honing their right hands

86 Through the assistance of Salutius, the brother of Olympius 3, Evagrius 6 received a post, probably as a governor, in late 363 and thus evaded curial duties.

87 Valentinian and Valens. Valens became emperor on 20 March 364. By December 364, Valentinian had gone to the west.

88 Salutius has nominated for governorships advocates whose hard work he had observed while sitting in judgement on the Praetorian Prefect's throne.

89 Libanius points to the limits on even a prefect's powers of patronage.

90 The orators (ὀρίτορες) nominated for governorships are treated here as men of *paideia* and practitioners of eloquence.

on shorthand have been on the rise, while our interests have depreciated, but you've honoured the domain of eloquence through those who received political offices, and for our sake you've filled the schools with young men, instilling in them a desire for eloquence through a hope of commensurate honours.⁹¹ 7. Do not believe that you've benefited those men⁹² any more than you've benefited us who live under the Muses, and do not suppose that those who have given great porticos to the cities have achieved honour as great as that conferred on you by your actions for these governors and for eloquence. The porticos are grand things but they lack soul, whereas your actions make virtue flourish in men's souls and make many men want to practise virtue. 8. But what caused consternation to men of sound judgement, I'll explain and not cover up: when they saw some men receiving the tablets of office and heard about others, but saw Arsenius cast aside, they asked themselves how this could happen, and they went through in detail questions like these: 'Is the man not well born? Was he not self-controlled as a boy? Is he not a just man? Not a forceful speaker? Hasn't he all but grown old'⁹³ in circuits around the courts? Isn't he free of the sort of accusations that have often ensnared many men who lived their lives in the courts? It's likely that the man who is above illicit gain in this station will also, as a governor, honour nobility before profit.' 9. From conversations of that sort with one another, they proceeded to me, on the grounds that I was responsible for these things and had ordered what shouldn't have been done, while he, by trusting a friend, has been harmed. What state of mind do you suppose I'm in when I hear such things? How do I feel in private? What kind of nights do you suppose I pass? Even if Arsenius doesn't rebuke me, he has many people doing this for him. That I who seemed to have helped not a few friends now seem to have deprived a friend of an honour, which surely could have been his, how is that tolerable or bearable? 10. Help me, by Zeus, since my reputation is at stake and free me from a reproach that I couldn't live with, and if I'm being slandered by people who've interpreted the situation that way, stop their slander. If indeed anything presumptuous has been done, then inflict a penalty on me, but display Arsenius among those considered blessed.

91 By nominating for governorships men with traditional rhetorical training, as opposed to stenography (ταχυγραφία), Salutius has ensured that boys will now pursue rhetoric. Libanius had counselled precisely this policy in spring 363 to the governor of Syria, Alexander 5 (*ep.* 838.6/B94).

92 The new office-holders.

93 He was slightly younger than Libanius, thus in his late 40s.

169. TO CALLISTIO

(April/June 364) F1233 W1127

Libanius wrote B169 to Callistio, a poet who was serving as assessor to the Prefect Salutius, to request help for the Arsenius 2 discussed in B168. It was common practice to write to a high official and to the official's assessors, and it is worthwhile to note Libanius' different modes of persuasion depending on his addressee.

1. With Idomeneus we also summon Meriones,⁹⁴ with the noble Salutius we summon the excellent Callistio, since he shares in all the tributes paid to that man by mankind. Many have been paid at different times, but very many are paid now due to the aid by which you've supported eloquence, he by taking action, you by proposing it to him. 2. I was pleased at the political offices that were assigned, but I was not a little pained by the fact that Arsenius, who is very dear to me and who would rightly serve as governor, you have kept in the ranks of the advocates. Yet he's the same age as some governors, not much younger than others, and he's a lot older than others. His oratory is formidable and noble, and his judgement is superior to his oratory. 3. As for the charge that's been levelled,⁹⁵ first, good sir, let it be viewed as a minor thing, for so it is, and let it be judged that forcing the issue was my doing, and don't let him [Arsenius] be prevented from being honoured – rather, deliberate concerning me. I shall endure whatever penalty you impose, since whatever it is, it will be lighter than the appearance of a friend being upset. 4. But by Apollo and the Muses, from whom your poems derive, set him up in honour and temper your anger against me. The 'persuasion of a friend is a strong thing'.⁹⁶

170. TO SCYLACIUS

(Sent to Berytus, 365) F1336 W1409

B170 is another letter concerning attacks on Hellenes in the period after Julian's death. It concerns Evanthius 3, who held some position under Julian, but was apparently, to judge from Libanius' elusive language here, dismissed from favour. He is back in favour under Valentinian and Valens. He nonetheless revered the memory of Julian and is a loyal friend. The letter-carrier, however, is Evanthius' brother, who wishes assistance from Scylacius 2, a teacher of law in Berytus.

94 Meriones was the companion in arms of King Idomeneus of Crete, cf. *Iliad* 2.650.

95 See Introduction to B168.

96 Nestor counselling Patroclus to persuade Achilles to battle, *Iliad* 11.793, trans. Lattimore.

1. Evanthius has reached us from the palace itself, a man entrusted with very many things by that soul⁹⁷ who struck wonder in all men, and a man who ran very many risks for what the other considered right; later he was treated unjustly, not by that man⁹⁸ – may I never utter that! – but the fellow who provoked other criticism of that time was responsible for this as well.⁹⁹ 2. Evanthius censures the one,¹⁰⁰ but he never ceases to praise the other and moreover he does this though he is held in honour by those who now have power. Though many will enjoy honours, those who will do so justifiably are few. Evanthius might even be crowned for his excellence towards his friends. For him neither cliff nor fire nor sword is a source of fear nor anything else that must be endured by one helping a friend in any way. 3. If it weren't absolutely necessary for him to make haste to the emperors, he himself would encounter you. But now you have instead of him his brother, who admires his brother's course of action and imitates his conduct. 4. Become a friend to both of them, the one who is present, on the one hand, and, on the other, the one who is absent, through actions on the former's behalf.

171. TO AETIUS

(Sent to Bithynia, autumn 359) F76 W74

Probably an Antiochene *curialis*, Aetius 1 was nominated to the senate in Constantinople in 359. This surprisingly curt note speaks volumes about Libanius' attitude towards the new senate on the Bosphorus and its destructive effect on traditional municipal life.

1. I didn't advise you to abandon your native land, your home, your family, and the expectations of you, nor could I ever advise such things to a citizen who represents so great a city. 2. But a counsellor¹⁰¹ appeared more persuasive than I, and something appeared more exalted in your eyes than your own city. Although I don't approve of your decision, I pray that it has a happy end. This too may be in the hands of Fortune.

97 The emperor Julian.

98 Julian.

99 Evanthius was wronged by a supporter of Julian whose conduct provoked criticism of Julian's policies. The most controversial figure in Julian's retinue was the philosopher Maximus of Ephesus, whom Libanius always regarded with coolness, cf. *Orr.* 18.202–03; 1.123; *ep.* 694/N80.

100 The courtier or official responsible for his removal from favour.

101 Probably the philosopher Themistius, who oversaw the expansion of the senate, cf. *Introductions* to B66–67.

172. TO FIRMINUS

(Sent to Palestine, summer 356) F532 W446

Libanius was attentive to the family interests of his former teacher Zenobius, who died in 355. Zenobius was cousin to the prominent *principalis* Argyrius and left relatives in his native Elusa in Palestine and at Antioch. A young Boethus, for example, provided services in Antioch for Libanius (*epp.* 118, 166/B91), who reciprocated by helping the family with problems in Elusa and also in Phoenicia. In Elusa, the family competed with rivals for the post of ‘guardian of the peace’ (*eirenephylax*), a position with enough financial rewards to spark competition and provoke animosities (Liebeschuetz [1972], 122–23). In 356, the governor of Palestine, Firminus 2, had dismissed from office the elder Boethus, father of Libanius’ assistant of the same name. Libanius wrote B172 to Firminus, requesting that Boethus ‘appear in the condition he was previously in’, implying some honour, but not restoration of his office. *Ep.* 322 suggests that Boethus was accorded some show of honour in 357 by the governor Clematius 2. In 359, Libanius was called upon to intercede on the same issue, although this time Zenobius, a relation of Boethus, had been effectively deposed as guardian of the peace by a powerful clique, as Libanius complained to the *comes Orientis*, Domitius Modestus 2 (*ep.* 101/N54). He wrote also to the *comes*’ assessor Urbanus, claiming that Zenobius had been driven off his land and requesting that Urbanus make the *comes* well disposed towards Zenobius, ‘either by speaking to him face to face or by writing, since it is more important to get nothing than to get something along with the governor’s anger’ (*ep.* 102).

1. By writing you do us honour, but what we asked to receive, *that* you neither do nor do you explain why it ought not to be done, and therefore you cause us pain. 2. I must ‘Once again to Pytho’,¹⁰² for once more I’m going to discuss Boethus with you. This Boethus is from the city of Elusa, a cousin of Zenobius, whom we honour in death even more than when he was alive. Having found Boethus the guardian of the peace, you dismissed him and entrusted the business to someone else. 3. I’m not criticising, but I am asking a favour, that Boethus appear in the condition he was previously in. If that’s what I really want, and it’s no trouble for you, and there’s no shame involved in the favour, why don’t you grant it?¹⁰³

102 Pytho is Delphi. On the origin of the proverb, see note to B139.1.

103 The exact nature of Libanius’ request is vague. I infer that he is not requesting full restoration of the office, since he claims that the favour is ‘no trouble’ and involves ‘no shame’, whereas the post of guardian of the peace was obviously hotly disputed between rival families.

173. TO ARISTAENETUS

(Sent to Bithynia, spring 357) F561 W475

The appropriate length for a letter is a common epistolary theme. Libanius' correspondents often complain that his letters are too short, including his intimate friend Aristaenetus 1 of Nicomedia, who received the longest and most 'newsy' letters in the corpus. For example, *epp.* 405/N6 (spring 355) and 430/N11 (winter 355/6) both contain lively and detailed narratives of Libanius' sophistic activities after his return to Antioch. In summer 356, Libanius sent a truncated narrative of his activities and ended the letter with the words, 'That's my business for you, but if you would happily learn of my affairs down to the most trivial detail, you have Gymnasius at your side and there's nothing he doesn't know', *ep.* 504). Libanius sent five more short notes prior to the current letter sent in spring 357. Aristaenetus had complained about the brevity of *ep.* 504 (perhaps too about the short notes) and about Libanius' failure to introduce properly the letter-carrier, Gymnasius 2. Here Libanius responds and gives his views on the appropriate length of a letter, using a letter of Aristaenetus to the Praetorian Prefect, Strategius Musonianus, as his chief example.

1. Even Aristaenetus, though previously one of the wise, has become in my view one of the undiscerning, who measure letters by cubits and hands, and if he doesn't get long ones, he's suffered terribly and been wronged! I know that you know that deeds are the measure of words. Surely, the convention about words embraces the province of letters as well. 2. Now, on that occasion the letter-carrier 'abridged' the letter for me, since he could recount my affairs to you in detail.¹⁰⁴ If I narrated them, he would be slighted. Nor was it at all the case that Gymnasius was unknown to you, that I needed to instruct you who he was, and that I avoided this out of laziness concerning letters.¹⁰⁵ 3. So what is the boundary between profane ground and the inner sanctum?¹⁰⁶ You see how you sent a long, beautiful letter to Strategius, since the subject required length. Brief letters have come to you from me, and

104 Gymnasius 2, who travelled from Antioch to Constantinople in summer 356 with *ep.* 504 to Aristaenetus.

105 Aristaenetus already knew Gymnasius 2, but correspondents expected to receive elegant character descriptions of those bringing news. Libanius himself complained to Aristaenetus in *ep.* 518, 'You've added to my pains by not writing. If you should say, "Themistius arrived in place of a letter," you'll hear, "What could be more fitting for [the subject of] a letter than Themistius?"'

106 Literally 'between the profane and the closing of the doors'. At Plato, *Symposium* 218b, just before narrating his attempted seduction of Socrates, Alcibiades says, 'The servants, if any of them is profane or uncultured, must place great doors on their ears!' Closing the doors against the profane is the language of mystery rites.

certainly long ones came in the past, since at that time they were about many subjects, whereas later they weren't about so many, and there was no need [for length]. 4. Listen to how what you wrote to him came into my hands. He¹⁰⁷ returned from Chalcedon,¹⁰⁸ and I – this is my custom – greeted him before the city.¹⁰⁹ As soon as he embraced me, he said that he would give me the letter that had come to him from you. 5. These remarks were spoken with joy, conveying honour on you and me, and Nebridius¹¹⁰ was riding with him and heard them. When I came home, I read the letter he had given me – its length was no greater than its beauty. I then praised it, and he was pleased.¹¹¹ 6. I owe a debt of gratitude to Olympius¹¹² for many things, that he's reported events to you, my partisans, the two who have been crushed, those leaping for joy, those howling in grief¹¹³ – I can't tell you how much pleasure I feel. It would be an expected reaction, if you counted it a gain not to be deceived about my affairs. 7. Since you've learned to love my speeches, you're in the wrong in that you don't pay them honour. I'm not asking for money, but those old books, which you long ago promised as a gift, but now you won't even give them on exchange!¹¹⁴

107 Strategius Musonianus.

108 A city located across the Bosphorus from Constantinople.

109 An allusion to the custom of the city notables to greet travelling dignitaries in an *adventus* ceremony before the city gates.

110 Nebridius 1, *comes Orientis* 354–58. He was later sent by Constantius II to Gaul to serve as Julian's quaestor, became Praetorian Prefect of the Gauls in 360–61, and Praetorian Prefect of the East in 365. Libanius' relations with him were cool.

111 Either Strategius waited while Libanius read the letter in front of his own house, or alternatively, Libanius read the letter in private and praised it at his next reception in the Prefect's palace. *Ep.* 326.2/N26 alludes to another instance in which Strategius handed on a letter of Aristaenetus.

112 Olympius 3, a lifelong friend of Libanius. He had been governor of Macedonia in 356 and spent 357 in Bithynia, fending off attacks resulting from his tenure of office, cf. *ep.* 581. His entry into the senate at Constantinople is the subject of B83–84.

113 Noisy demonstrations of approval, like leaping up, were common at sophistic performances. Those howling in grief are Libanius' rivals, especially Acacius 6 and his supporters.

114 Libanius had remarked on the beauty of the handwriting in an old book, prompting Aristaenetus to offer to send him other books in a similar hand, which he had inherited from his grandfather. Aristaenetus apparently did not understand the allusion here, since Libanius describes the entire scene in a later letter (*ep.* 580/N25).

174. TO ARISTAENETUS

(Carried by Pelagius to Bithynia, spring 357) F562 W477

Aristaenetus' reluctance to hold office is a recurring theme. He had been offered an office, probably a position of assessor under the Prefect Strategius Musonianus, but had declined in winter 356/7 (*ep.* 537). B174–75 both concern a new offer of a post as assessor under Anatolius 3, Prefect of Illyricum (357–60). Aristaenetus would decline this offer as well.

Ep. 562/B174, like *ep.* 563/B59 to Anatolius, was carried by Pelagius 1, an old schoolmate of Libanius and a *principalis* of Cyrrhus, as he journeyed to court in spring 357. He was serving as a legate from the Provincial Assembly (*koinon*) of Syria, cf. Liebeschuetz (1972), 266.

1. Very fitting are the praises you sing of the noble Spectatus,¹¹⁵ and rest assured that you adorn our family by these praises for him. As for the office with which the emperor is honouring you,¹¹⁶ you kept silent, but Spectatus informed me. He said that it gave more pleasure to the donor than to the recipient. So, whatever someone zealously pursues on your behalf, he has, in the first place, benefited himself by it! 2. Yet hesitation, delay, and an unwillingness to budge, though hardly noble, are nonetheless your way, so that I didn't need to ask what you've decided to do, rather I anticipated what you'd do and I've said it. 3. You ought to divest yourself of this idleness and acquire great ease with small tasks, particularly as you'll consort with a man pre-eminent in all respects and when it involves a certain renown to share in his tasks. 4. But you'll mull this over with yourself. When you know this Pelagius, you'll know the most courteous of the Syrians. I praise him for that – not that he doesn't have a good family, and moreover eloquence, influence in his city, and other things by which one might be distinguished – but I praise him because he has made a name for himself by the courteousness of his character more than by those other means, and consequently he lives amid great wealth and even more affection. 5. You won't need many months to form the same judgement of the man but if you spend time with him and hear him speaking and see him worshipping,¹¹⁷ – for he's always doing that – you'll admire him, that he is like he is, and you'll count his fellow citizens blessed.

115 Libanius' cousin, Spectatus 1, who is the addressee or subject of B5–10.

116 Post of assessor under Anatolius 3, Prefect of Illyricum.

117 Libanius assumes that Aristaenetus and Pelagius will be able to spend time together, presumably in Sirmium, where Aristaenetus will serve as the Prefect's assessor and Pelagius will find the court after it has completed the Vicennalia celebration in May 357.

175. TO ARISTAENETUS

(Sent to Bithynia, spring 357) F582 W497

Anatolius 3, Praetorian Prefect of Illyricum (357–60) has asked Domitius Modestus 2 and Aristaenetus 1 to be assessors at his tribunal in Sirmium. Domitius agreed to serve and carried this letter of introduction as he made his way to Sirmium. In the following year, he was made *comes Orientis*. Characteristically, Aristaenetus didn't budge.

1. A splendid team, you and the worthy Domitius! A good charioteer¹¹⁸ yokes you together and casts the same vote on you both, for the man who summons you to share his toils summons him as well on equal terms. 2. But you, without any effort, stay sitting there,¹¹⁹ while he goes to lighten the prefect's work, blessed because of the one who called him, and intending to make the prefect fortunate by his contribution. His contribution consists in legal expertise, skill in speaking, and his just character. 3. You, then, rejoice with the one, for the man he is to receive, and with the other, for the man he is to join, and make Domitius your friend, so that you take full pleasure in your new possession.

176. TO ARISTAENETUS

(Sent to Bithynia, spring 357) F586 W501

Libanius' cousin was Syriarch in spring 357 and searching for bears for his beast show in the following summer (see Introduction to B1). Libanius had requested help from Aristaenetus and his kinsman Alcimus, who was also giving beast shows at the time in Bithynia (*epp.* 587, 598). Antioch had sent Alcimus animals from its mountains (§4) and Libanius expected his Bithynian friends to help find bears for his cousin's show at Antioch. Aristaenetus did nothing but write a witty letter proclaiming his inability to help. Here Libanius responds.

1. I was ashamed at what you wrote concerning the wild beasts. You didn't seem like a man distressed at the fact that you couldn't do us a favour, but like a man making his helplessness into a source of amusement. Now someone has said that you weren't in fact helpless, but were indulging in your joke as a cover. 2. It happened that the letter came to me via my uncle's hands, the very man who knows least of anyone how to indulge in levity, and he thought that what you were doing was right for the moment. But now is not

118 The Prefect Anatolius 3.

119 Aristaenetus declined the offer.

the right moment for that, since Necessity is putting pressure on us. 3. The fact that your kinsman¹²⁰ was performing the same liturgies in Bithynia was the opportunity that allowed you to show that you do not count your friends less important than your kin. But, I guess, you seized on it as a pretext for laziness. 4. We've sent you what our mountain nurtures. Now you, even if you're not ready to initiate a favour, show yourself not bad at returning one.

177. TO ARISTAENETUS

(Carried by Dianius to Bithynia, summer 358) F374 W377

In 358, Constantius II honoured his wife by creating a new diocese of Pietas in Asia Minor with Nicomedia as its capital. Aristaenetus I was appointed its first *vicarius*, which is surprising if one considers that he had never held office. Libanius alludes to the unusual nature of the appointment at §2, since a man would normally hold multiple governorships or a palatine post prior to being appointed *vicarius*. Libanius here encourages Aristaenetus and introduces Dianius (*BLZG* 120), a native of Bithynia and distant kinsman of Aristaenetus who had fled his city council due to impoverishment and has lived in Antioch for some years. He hopes, with a kinsman as *vicarius*, to return home without being compelled to take up duties on the council. He had been a student of Libanius in Constantinople and had followed Libanius to Antioch. He was carrying *epp.* 374–78 on this journey.

1. You were destined to get a taste of the troubles of office one day – you too,¹²¹ as though you hadn't tried every possible way to avoid office! – and now you have a belt, duties, a crowd about your doors, sleepless nights, and anxieties, and all that laziness and sloth have disappeared. 2. I'm not the least concerned that you may lose your head in grappling with a very high office straightaway, since your nature knows how to succeed even without practice, so that I'm confident that you'll quickly show yourself to be remarkable in these present circumstances, and, in future time, you'll quickly come into a more distinguished office because of your excellence in this one. 3. The reason for which I myself was very pleased, and for which you as well should rejoice at being free of envy, is this: whoever has received an account of your activity has received pleasure along with the account. Furthermore, none of those who claimed before to esteem you has been confuted, on the grounds that he *claimed* it, but loved you very little. 4. The old remark 'Aristaenetus deserves it' went through the entire city on every

120 Alcimus of Nicomedia, also a close friend of Libanius.

121 I have adopted Reiske's conjecture καὶ σὺ.

tongue. The emperor was especially admired for having put together more cleverly than a honeybee a political office that was a veritable honeypot!¹²² 5. If it were possible for me to run to you in person, I'd come on the fly. But as it stands, inasmuch as the opportunity was provided him to travel, Dianius has come. He is your kinsman, my companion, and he has often in the past been called by you, but now he's called by the moment. The fact that you rule Bithynia draws the man back, though he had for a long time fled his home through fear of the city council and impoverishment. For if they'd caught this fellow residing there and unable to perform liturgies, he would have ended up in chains. 6. So a foreign land with free status seemed to him more desirable than his homeland with no rights. And though he grieved at the separation from his mother, he hesitated to see his mother with expectations of that sort. 7. Nonetheless, by his life here he has honoured his mother and you and all of you [Bithynians], by living with self-control and courtesy and by maintaining a respectful attitude. Most importantly, while not corrupting his sense of justice toward me in any way, he didn't attract hate from the other side.¹²³ Consequently, I took heart and said to him that he shares a common kinship with you and he gave the appearance of being worthy of his bloodline. 8. So receive your kinsman, since he acquired many friends here through his character. And take counsel concerning him. What path must he walk? Should he remain at home? Or return here? Or live in the great City, making his livelihood from the courts?

178. TO ARISTAENETUS

(Sent to Bithynia, summer 358) F381 W384

Obodianus (*BLZG* 222), son of Argyrius, was a member of one of Antioch's foremost families with a distinguished record of lavish spending on behalf of the city. Obodianus' son, named for his grandfather Argyrius, is still young, but is already being introduced to public life through curial service. Currently, he is supplying wood for the public baths, and he will in future, offer games for the city involving horse races. Two four-horse teams, a gift from the emperor, are being raised in Bithynia and Aristaenetus is requested to take an interest in their training.

122 Literally, 'honeycomb', an image used also at *ep.* 112.1/N55.

123 Libanius almost never uses the word 'hate', but he is more frank with Aristaenetus than any other correspondent. *Ep.* 697/B129 mentions Libanius' 'hate', that is, intense animosity towards Constantius' reign, being reported at Julian's court. It is not clear here whether the haters are partisans of Constantius who resent Hellenes like Libanius or whether the hate comes from Christians, as Cabouret (2000), 61, infers.

1. Obodianus fulfilled the role of a child towards me, his father the role of a father towards me, so that even my uncle often said to me that that house ought to be honoured by me second only to the gods! Since they've become all in all to me, there is no way that they're not deserving of your enthusiasm as well. 2. Recall too the admiration with which the youth filled you by what he said when he went on embassy.¹²⁴ I know that when you left the court-house and bumped into me, you called my native city a 'mother of orators' and cited as testimony the ambassador's eloquence. 3. Obodianus' son, though he hasn't yet embarked on rhetoric, has imitated his father by embarking on his civic liturgies, for his father was at a similar age when he expended sums of that sort, pre-empting through love of honour the requirements of the law.¹²⁵ 4. At present, Argyrius (the grandson has the same name as his grandfather) is caring for men's bodies at the baths,¹²⁶ but he's intending to entertain the city with horse races and has been honoured with an imperial gift. The gift is two four-horse teams and they're being trained in Bithynia. 5. In assuring that the finest horses reach us, your influence is very important, or rather it's everything. So look kindly on the man who hands you this letter and show some enthusiasm for the task at hand.

179. TO HYPERECHIUS

(Sent to Galatia, late-winter/spring 362) F704 W615

Hyperechius of Ancyra was Libanius' favourite pupil, though 'something of a goose whom Libanius always saw as a swan' (Norman [1992], vol. 2, 77). Ignoring Libanius' advice that he should become an advocate and his father's counsel to become a senator at Constantinople, Hyperechius set his sights on an imperial office. The post he secured in 361 on the staff of the governor of Galatia was, however, ill defined, leaving him a 'semicivil servant' (*ep.* 308/N75), probably a *supernumerarius*, which put him on a waiting list for an official post. Libanius wrote countless letters in an effort to secure him a good post, but without success. Under Julian, he was set to

124 The meeting occurred at Nicomedia during Libanius' stay there between 344 and 349. Obodianus also served on embassies in 359 to invite Constantius II back to Antioch (*ep.* 114) and in 362 to congratulate the new emperor Julian. However, he was thrown from his horse en route to Constantinople in 362 and spent the winter in Ancyra convalescing (*ep.* 698, 702). On the embassies, see Liebeschuetz (1972), 266–67.

125 Love of honour (φιλοτιμία) is used by Libanius of the most onerous liturgies, especially the Syriarchate, cf. Petit (1956a), 131 n. 9. *Ep.* 113 (winter 359/60) reveals that Obodianus is still preparing his son's games.

126 Argyrius' father is funding operation of the public baths. The greatest expense was purchase of wood for the fires to keep the hot baths up to temperature.

enter the senate, but his enemies derailed this project after Julian's death. In frustration at repeated rebuffs, he rallied to the usurper Procopius in 365, but was handed over by his own troops and executed (Ammianus 26.8.5). On his career and connections, see Festugière (1959), 142–53; Petit (1957a), 162–65.

The current letter, written in late winter or spring 362, alludes to the crowd of travellers making their way to Julian's court in Constantinople. The principal interest of the letter is Libanius' allusion to his past predictions to Hyperechius that a day would come 'demanding a rendering of accounts and undoing belts of office', that is, a change of regimes would occur when unworthy office-holders would be dismissed and good men appointed to the posts they deserved. That day has arrived and Libanius wants to know what Hyperechius intends to do in the changed political circumstances.

1. Alas, alas, how often did you shake your head and say to yourself in solitude or at night, 'I'm neglected! I'm scorned! Everything is changed!' The proof of this for you was the fact that a crowd of people were racing past you on their way to Thrace,¹²⁷ but no letter either short or long reached you from me. 2. Many people asked me, but I didn't give one to anybody, and I'll tell you the reason. I knew that everybody would want to lodge with you and live it up, and, if you didn't receive them, you'd give the appearance of being in the wrong, whereas, if you sat there and entertained 'more men than the leaves',¹²⁸ it would be annoying, not so much because of the expense, but because the business on your estates would of necessity be neglected. 3. At the same time, I knew that people are happy to eat but they don't know how to remember hospitality, rather they think it manly if they speak ill of those who took them in. 4. So I wasn't silent because I'd banished you from my soul, rather I thought it best to delay in order that I might not become a source of anything unpleasant or bad for you. 5. But now, since I've got hold of Miccalus¹²⁹ (and this is what I do) I'm writing to dispel the charge¹³⁰ and to remind you of those old predictions, by which I prophesied that a time would come demanding a rendering of accounts and undoing belts of office. 6. It was possible for you not to misunderstand those remarks completely and in present circumstances there's some room for manoeuvre, but I'd like to know what your attitude is and how you are planning to employ yourself.

127 Constantinople.

128 An allusion to Glaucus' remark at *Iliad* 6.146–50 that the generations of men are like the 'generation of leaves'.

129 Miccalus, son of Pompeianus i, an Antiochene *principalis* with whom Libanius' family had close ties. Miccalus' brother was Libanius' close friend Olympius 3. Miccalus became governor of Thrace in 362 through the patronage of Secundus Salutius 3.

130 Libanius claims that he customarily delays writing until he has a trusted letter-carrier.

180. TO HYPERECHIUS

(Carried by Domitius Modestus 2 to Ancyra, winter 362/3) F792 W702

Newly appointed as Prefect of Constantinople in late 362, Domitius Modestus 2 travelled from court in Antioch to Constantinople via Ancyra, where he delivered *ep.* 791/B108 to the governor, Maximus 19, and the current letter (*ep.* 792/B180) to Hyperechius. Libanius' influence was at its peak and he has worked on Modestus prior to his meeting with Hyperechius, who is urged here to seize the opportunity to travel to Constantinople with the new Prefect. His entry into the senate should proceed smoothly now. *Ep.* 804/B74 reveals that Modestus remained ready to help, but Hyperechius was slow to act and all these plans soon came undone amid the debacle of the Persian expedition.

1. I'm setting you down as one of those now celebrating that the worthy Modestus is judged to be the sort of man he really is. Previously you benefited from his influence when you were enrolled among those you wished,¹³¹ and I suppose that now you won't be in fear of the high-and-mighty ones in the senate,¹³² since he'll persuade some and compel others to abide by justice. 2. So I shouldn't be surprised if you chose both to share his journey¹³³ and to become acquainted with people there. Those to whom you would have been obliged to pay court in a different situation, you'll now be able to consort with quite freely. A business that starts from a fine beginning normally grows with great ease, as do trees that have been firmly rooted. 3. Although these matters are hardly trifles, expect even greater things from the friendship and good fortune of Modestus. He'll take care that you also receive advancement, spurring himself on in some matters, and being prodded by me in others. 4. He will be granting a favour to me, even if I'm dead, by gratifying you in any way, since he's learned by many words, deeds, and not a few oaths, that your affairs are as important to me as my own.

181. TO BACCHIUS

(Sent to Cilicia, spring 362) F712 W624

Bacchius (*BLZG* 93) was a decurion of Tarsus and a sophistic devotee who made several trips to Antioch between 355 and 360, admired Libanius' declamations, and routinely requested and then praised anything Libanius produced (*epp.* 424, 455,

131 Hyperechius secured a post on the staff of the governor of Galatia in 361 with Modestus' help. But the post was not desirable, leaving him a 'semi-civil servant' (*ep.* 308/N75).

132 At Constantinople.

133 To Constantinople.

528, 590, 605). Under Julian, he was made a pagan priest and in spring 362 organised and funded a festival of Artemis involving restoration of the goddess' cult statue (it had been removed from the temple), a procession, sacrifices, several days of eating and drinking, and, finally, a celebratory oration delivered by Demetrius 2 (*ep.* 710/N83). Libanius heard about everything in detail from the man carrying a letter from Bacchius. As this reply makes clear, Libanius then repeated the narrative to Julianus 12, the *comes Orientis* and uncle of the emperor, who was so pleased that he intended to inform the emperor of everything that had happened. Bacchius' conduct was precisely what Julian had hoped for in the pagan revival and he would undoubtedly have held high office, if the emperor had survived the Persian campaign.

1. The governor¹³⁴ participated in the festival there in precisely the way I did – he wasn't in the dark about any of the details I knew. Quite the contrary, when he heard about the equipment, the sacrifices, the other expenses, and the splendour of every aspect of it, he was so pleased, and so pleased for the priest and the city, that he said that he would mention to the emperor himself what had been done. 2. But what cheered him most was the fact that, although you were but one man, you were all that was needed for the 'theft' of the statue.¹³⁵ Why, Diomedes needed Odysseus, too!¹³⁶ He encourages you through me towards restoring the temple as well, since some time ago he issued an edict¹³⁷ for everyone that what was in their possession be returned, and he's ready both to make a proclamation about whatever you advise concerning the site that has been profaned and to lend his assistance.¹³⁸

182. TO HESYCHIUS

(Sent to ?Cilicia, spring 362) F724 W636

In B182 Libanius writes to a pagan priest, Hesychius, about the case of a Theodulus (not in *BLZG*), accused of having constructed a grand villa in Antioch from misappropriated temple property. Men who wished to prosecute Theodulus approached

134 Ἀρχὼν, here referring to Julianus 12, the *comes Orientis* in 362–63.

135 The cult statue had not been destroyed. It had probably become part of a private art collection. Without soldiers to support him, Bacchius has successfully demanded restitution of the statue.

136 An allusion to the theft of the Palladium from Troy by Odysseus and Diomedes, cf. Apollodorus, *Library, Epitome* 5.13.

137 The edict on restitution of temple property is not extant, but we have the letter the emperor wrote to his uncle in spring 362 on this theme, cf. Julian, *ep.* 29.

138 Bacchius proceeded vigorously with the recovery of temple property, prompting Libanius to plead for moderation, cf. *ep.* 757/N91.

Libanius, who argued that the case should be handled by a panel of pagan priests, including Hesychius. Here Libanius counsels moderation to Hesychius, using the defence he had used on behalf of his two young kinsmen, Thalassius 2 and Bassianus 2, namely, that it was legal at the time for anyone who had the money to buy temple property (cf. *ep.* 1364/N105). Newly constructed villas should not be pulled down to restore the temples of the gods.

Seeck, *BLZG* 174, identifies the addressee as the Antiochene Hesychius ii, father of Celsus 3, Libanius' friend who was governor of Cilicia in 362. The current letter was filed with others sent to Cilicia. Hesychius may have been temporarily with his son in Tarsus.

1. You perhaps know better than others that I desire no less than you priests that the temples be restored to their beauty, and yet I wouldn't want this to take place at the expense of houses being destroyed, when it might happen and the houses remain standing as well, so that what presently is in existence may still stand and what is in ruins may be restored, and so that we don't in some respects adorn the cities while in other respects disfigure them. 2. There's a reason ready to hand to criticise the house of Theodulus, but it's worth sparing it, for it's beautiful and grand and it makes our city more beautiful than others. In particular, it should be spared because Theodulus didn't pull the temple apart out of arrogance and brutishness, but rather, he bought from the sellers who were at hand, making his payment and doing something that it was possible for anyone to do who could pay the price. Those who know everything about Theodulus' affairs claim that he often bought such things, and they believed that it was necessary to go to court. But knowing judges as I do, I didn't let them look for better ones than you, since I know that you'll devise some sort of plan by which you'll show yourselves to be concerned about the god and not unconcerned about the city.¹³⁹ Now, if anything tolerable happens, write to me so that I may praise you.

139 Normally, a provincial governor would hear such cases, not a panel of 'judges' (δικασταί). It appears that a commission of pagan priests has been appointed to investigate the spoliation of local shrines, like the three-man commission (including Libanius) that investigated the burning of Apollo's temple at Daphne in October 362. Libanius assumes that the Hesychius has influence and can act as a moderating force. Cf. Petit (1956a), 209; Cabouret (2000), 118–19.

183. TO ARISTON

(Sent to Euphratensis, spring 363) F1338 W1411

B183 is a request for help to Ariston i, a wealthy landowner from Cyrrhus in Euphratensis. Numenius, a man of humble rank, is hoping for Ariston's assistance in an investigation currently in progress. What is interesting about the brief note is the role played by religion in the recommendation.

1. This Numenius is one of those who spend their time on the gods. That is not a big deal now, since it's allowed, but when it seemed a dreadful thing and there was a penalty imposed for it, even then in the matter of sacrifice, he was more fearful of neglecting the great ones than he was of death for his devotions. 2. Security and the goodwill of good men are now his reward for piety. You are, in our view, the finest of men and leader of the chorus of worthies. Consequently, Numenius looked to you when he was wronged and seeks to get justice through you. 3. You'll follow what's done in the investigation, and clearly you'll esteem him for his other marks of humanity, for the writer's¹⁴⁰ sake and, much more, for the sake of the gods.

140 Libanius.



APPENDICES



APPENDIX 1

LIBANIUS' PRINCIPAL CORRESPONDENTS (355–65)

The following list includes those men who received, or are mentioned in, at least two letters that have been translated into English, either in the present volume or in Norman's Loeb edition. Each entry includes 1) the man's *PLRE* and *BLZG* numbers, 2) the salient features of his career, 3) his qualities or characteristics, both moral and cultural, 4) statistics on the total number of letters, translated and untranslated, which he received or in which he is mentioned, 5) a chronological list of the translated letters to or about him with a brief synopsis of the letters' contents. It may be assumed that each correspondent is the addressee of all letters listed under his name unless it is otherwise indicated. The format employed here is an adaptation of that employed by Paul Petit in *FOL*, which includes complete lists of letters involving imperial officials. More detailed information and full documentation for the judgements given here on men's careers and qualities can be found under their respective entries in *PLRE* and *FOL*.

Acacius 8/i

<i>Career:</i>	Gov. of Phrygia (prior to 361); gov. of Galatia (361–62); <i>comes domorum per Cappadociam</i> (late 363–65).
<i>Qualities:</i>	Studied with rival sophist, but sent his son Marcus to Lib. in 363; helpful to Lib. and friends in Galatia, Maximus xii and Hyperechius i; probably a pagan, since he had difficulty securing a post during the anti-pagan reaction.
298/B99	Letters Received: 10 Letters Mentioned: 6 (summer 361) A. is exchanging governorships, Phrygia for Galatia. Introduction of Maximus xii and son, Hyperechius i, and request for assistance.
308/N75	(summer 361) To Domitius Modestus 2. Request to write to A. on behalf of Hyperechius i, who is only a 'semi-civil servant'.
617/B73	(autumn 361) To Domitius Modestus 2. Thanks for writing to A. on behalf of Hyperechius i. Caution about hostility caused by Modestus' building project in Antioch.

- 651/B100 (autumn 361) Thanks to A. for cordial reception of Maximus xii in governor's palace.
- 732/B101 (spring 362) Gratitude for dinner invitations extended to Hyperechius i.
- 779/B107 (autumn 362) To Maximus 19, succeeding A. as gov. of Galatia. A. has brought a letter from Maximus to Lib., who has read it out in the palace.
- 1449/B46 (winter 363/4) To Caesarius 1, *comes rei privatae*, whose aid is needed so that A. can secure a post. Julian's supporters are being passed over for advancement.
- 1174/B102 (spring 364) Encouragement for A., who is disappointed with his post as *comes domorum per Cappadociam*. His son had studied with Lib., but has departed.
- 1222/B103 (spring 364) Advice that A. send his son Marcus to study rhetoric with Cappadocian rhetorician, Palladius 8.
- 1223/B104 (364) To Philippus 3, Cappadocian orator and poet, whose sons study with Lib. Wish that Philippus and A. may become acquainted.
- 1458/B159 (365) Request to A. as *comes domorum per Cappadociam* to help Lemmatius, High Priest of Athens, attacked by a man also hostile to A.
- 1514/B105 (365) Lib. apologises for asking A. to purchase a horse for him, which was illegal. A. should help sons of Achaeus 2, a son-in-law of Sopater 2.

Alexander 5/ii

Career:

Gov. of Syria (March–summer 363). Dismissed by Jovian.

Qualities:

Aggressive pagan of difficult character; prone to impetuous, even brutal, behaviour. Implemented the pagan revival vigorously and at the cost of controversy and hostility. Extremely helpful to Lib., who tried to moderate his conduct. Lib.'s letters to A. are ornate, indicating that he was a man of culture.

Letters Received: 18 Letters Mentioned: 11

811/N100

(March 363) To the emperor Julian, confessing that he had disapproved of A.'s appointment, but the harsh methods are producing results.

838/B94

(spring 363) A. honours Lib. in the council and by recruiting students for his school. Lib. tries to moderate A.'s heavy-handedness.

- 1351/N104 (spring 363) Counsel of moderation in dealing with Apamea's council and collection of taxes.
- 1353/B149 (spring 363) To Demetrius 2. Letter of introduction for Macedonius ii, appointed 'small claims judge' in Tarsus by A.
- 1357/B95 (spring 363) To Marcellinus vi of Apamea, who fears that A. will saddle him with an unwelcome curial duty.
- 1360/B96 (spring 363) Request that A. help a family in distress.
- 1392/B97 (spring 363) Intervention for Auxentius 5, appointed by A. to be *syndikos* or *defensor* in Tarsus. He is more suited to supervision of building projects.
- 1406/N110 (spring 363) Request for moderation in dealing with shopkeepers, whose practices have provoked an official inquiry.
- 1411/B98 (spring 363) Intervention for Eusebius 17, accused of undermining the revival of sacrifices.

Anatolius 3/i

Career:

Native of Berytus; possibly the PUC from Phoenicia who befriended Lib. in Constantinople (350–53). He 'beautified' Antioch through building projects (*ep.* 311.2) when gov. of Syria or *comes Orientis* before 355. Offered, but declined, post of PUR in 355 (*epp.* 391, 423); Praetorian Prefect of Illyricum from 357 until his death in 360 (*ep.* 549.1; Ammianus 21.6.5). It is unclear whether A. is identical to the Prefect Anatolius known from Eunapius, *Lives of the Philosophers* 490ff. and the Theodosian Code. The problem is reviewed in Bradbury (2000).

Qualities:

Model Late Roman official: expert in Roman law, passionate about Greek culture, upright and efficient. Lib.'s most reliable supporter at the court of Constantius II. He turned his correspondence with Lib. into a sophistic *agon* and eventually offended Lib. (*ep.* 578/B60). The last letters to A. are hostile, *epp.* 19/N40, 80/N46 and 81/N47.

Letters Received: 25 Letters Mentioned: 3

- 391/N4 (March 355) A. is at court in Milan, having refused post of PUR. Account of Lib.'s sophistic activities after return to Antioch. Entreaty to help secure return home.

- 438/B55 (winter 355/6) A. is said to be supporting Lib.'s return to Antioch. Hope that A. will accept high office. Complaints about ill-health.
- 535/B57 (summer 356) For Apolinarius 1, brother of Quirinus, burdened with an unwanted duty.
- 509/N20 (summer 356) News that A. will decline the Prefecture of the East.
- 512/B56 (summer 356) Spectatus has reported that A. is declining the Prefecture of the East.
- 549/B58 (winter 356) A. has been appointed Praetorian Prefect of Illyricum.
- 552/N22 (Feb.–March 357) Carried to Sirmium by Letoius i, en route to Rome. Praise for A. from Strategius Musonianus. A.'s firmness in matters of justice.
- 563/B59 (Feb.–March 357) Carried to Sirmium by Pelagius 1, en route to Rome. Praise for A.'s efforts in appointing Clematius 2 gov. of Palestine and Aristaenetus 1 to be an assessor. A.'s justice.
- 574/B19 (spring 357) For Iamblichus 2, en route to Rome. Recollection of young man's lineage and hope that A. befriends him.
- 578/B60 (spring 357) Beginning of rift with A., who has offended Lib. by calling him a flatterer. Criticism of A.'s arrogance and harsh tongue.
- 582/B175 (spring 357) To Aristaenetus 1, offered post of assessor by A. along with Domitius Modestus 2.
- 583/B61 (spring 357) For Modestus 2, appointed assessor by A.
- 348/B63 (winter 358) Criticism for failing to do more to help Tuscianus 2, stuck in a low-prestige post.
- 362/B64 (358) For young sons of Marcellus, enrolled as imperial couriers and ordered to appear at court. A. should intervene with Musonius 1, *magister officiorum*.
- 333/B6 (summer 358) Praise for Spectatus 1, en route to the emperor after embassy to Persia. Jealousy of A. over Spectatus' rhetorical triumph.
- 339/B62 (?autumn 358) Praise for appointing Sabinus 5 gov. of Syria. Appeal to help Theodorus 11 in similar way.
- 19/N40 (winter 358/9) A. has replied to *ep.* 333/B6, needling Lib. for excessive praise. Lib.'s theory of panegyric with

- mix of praise and blame of A. Censure of A.'s harshness towards Severus 9. Request to help Januarius 4.
- 80/N46 (359) A. has mocked Lib.'s request for an undefined 'honour'. Attack on A. for arrogance and desire for flattery, not friendship.
- 81/N47 (359) A.'s post will soon end and he is desolate. Attack on his long, rambling letters. For Julianus 9, young and ambitious. Criticism of Datianus 1, powerful courtier. Last letter to A.

Andronicus 3/ii

- Career:* Native of Constantinople and admired former pupil. Nephew of a powerful official, probably the Prefect Strategius Musonianus. Gov. of Phoenicia (360–61); rallied to the usurper Procopius in 365–66 and appointed gov. of Bithynia and *vicarius* of Thrace. His plea of having acted under duress was rejected and he was executed.
- Qualities:* A good Hellene and close friend of Lib., who praises his skill in rhetoric, honesty, self-control, respect for the laws. Eulogy at *Or.* 62.56–59.
- Letters Received: 39 Letters Mentioned: 3
- 399/B86 (spring 355) Request that A. stop trying to have Lib. recalled. Also, he should cease to deal with Cleomenes.
- 477/N17 (early 356) A. has been indiscreet in making public contents of Lib.'s letters.
- 506/B54 (late 356) Warning that A.'s uncle is angry and flight is the best plan.
- 515/N21 (winter 356/57) A. is naïve to think that Lib. can soften the angry uncle, who is incensed against A. for not relinquishing property requested for a daughter's dowry.
- 560/B87 (spring 357) Model letter of reference for Majorinus.
- 127/N58 (early 360) To Acacius 7, nominated for office or the senate, and exempted by the Prefect Hermogenes. A. had informed Lib. that Acacius would be obliged to take the office. A. has read declamations of Acacius' son, Titianus.
- 150/N62 (360) Request to A. as gov. of Phoenicia that Fraternus be released from curial duties, since he is soon to take up senatorial duties in Constantinople.

- 156/B88 (360) Request for a letter of introduction from A. to gov. of Palestina Prima for Palestinian Auxentius v.
- 158/B89 (360) To Hypatius 1, gov. of Palestina Prima. Reassurance that A. is attentive to Hypatius' interests in his home province of Phoenicia.
- 159/B90 (360) Mild rebuke to A. for failing to be more attentive to Hypatius' interests in Phoenicia.
- 166/B91 (360) Request that A. intervene with Cyrillus, gov. of Palestina Salutaris.
- 175/B92 (360) Request to assist a poor student, Bassus ii, sent to deliver his first panegyric before A. as governor.
- 192/N66 (360) For Sebon, a Cretan whose inheritance of property in Phoenicia has been contested and long delayed.
- 195/N67 (360) Elaborate letter of introduction for Hierius 4, philosopher and former governor, allegedly responsible in 366 for execution of A. in aftermath of revolt of Procopius.
- 217/N71 (summer 360) Request for beast fighters for Lib.'s cousin, who is preparing the final spectacle of his Syriarchy.
- 1460/B93 (end 363) Introduction of incoming gov. of Phoenicia, Marius 1. A. is resident in Tyre.
- 1221/N121 (early 364) Praise of unnamed assessor of governor, Marius 1; mention of Olympius 3 and Gaianus 6.
- Araxius**
- Career:* Gov. of Palestine (before 353); *vicarius* of Asia (353/54); PUC (356); Praetorian Prefect under Procopius (365–66); exiled, but later reprieved (Amm. 26.10.7)
- Qualities:* Presumably a cultured pagan, since he was a companion (*hetairos*) of the Prince Julian in the early 350s, but no mention of literary culture in Lib.'s letters. Praise of good governance in *ep.* 482/B52.
- Letters Received: 5 Letters Mentioned: 1
- 482/B52 (spring 356) Introduction of Malchus to A. as new Proconsul of Constantinople.
- 503/B53 (summer 356) For Gymnasius 2, hoping for a post as advocate (?) under A.

Aristaenetus 1/i

- Career:* Native of Nicaea in Bithynia; declined twice to serve as assessor, first under the Prefect Strategius Musonianus, then under the Prefect Anatolius 3. Made *vicarius* of the new diocese of Pietas in 358. Died in office during the earthquake of 24 Aug. 358.
- Qualities:* A cultured Hellene and intimate friend of Lib. Unusual among Lib.'s contemporaries for his reluctance to accept political office.
- Letters Received: 33 Letters Mentioned: 4
- 405/N6 (355) Detailed account of Lib.'s sophistic activities since return to Antioch.
- 414/N8 (355) Brief consolation carried by the doctor Olympius 4. A. has lost his wife and cannot shake off his grief.
- 427 /N9 (late summer 355) Introduction of Lib.'s cousin, Spectatus 1.
- 430/N11 (late 355) A. still grieving for his wife; detailed account of the activities of the letter-carrier, Clematius 2, with mention of Strategius Musonianus, Alcimus and Phasganius.
- 459/B114 (winter 355) Letter of introduction for new gov. of Bithynia, Eusebius 40, brother of the empress Eusebia, wife of Constantius II.
- 561/B173 (spring 357) Discussion of rules governing letter-writing; description of Strategius Musonianus receiving a letter of A.; mention of Nebridius 1.
- 562/B174 (spring 357) Letter of introduction for Pelagius 1, en route to court; mention of Spectatus 1.
- 563/B59 (spring 357) To the Prefect Anatolius 3. Letter of introduction for Pelagius 1, en route to court; mention of Clematius 2.
- 571/N24 (spring 357) Warm letter of introduction for Iamblichus 2, en route to Rome.
- 580/N25 (spring 357) As in *ep.* 561/B173 (see above), discussion on appropriate length for a letter; request for old books inherited by A. and admired by Lib.; allusion to Lib.'s panegyric on daughter of the Prefect Strategius Musonianus.
- 582/B175 (spring 357) Both A. and Domitius Modestus 2, the

- letter-carrier, have been summoned to be assessors of the Prefect Anatolius 3. Modestus is en route to Sirmium.
- 586/B176 (spring 357) Rebuke that A. has failed to assist Lib.'s cousin, the current Syriarch, by sending bears for the impending spectacle; mention of Alcimius.
- 326/N26 (357/8) Support for A.'s hesitation to accept political office, since there is currently a flood of nominations and the honour would be diminished; mention of a letter of A. to Strategius Musonianus.
- 330/B11 (357/8) Letter of introduction for Lib.'s kinsman, Thalassius 2, en route to court in hope of securing a post; Thalassius also admired by the Prefect Strategius Musonianus.
- 331/N35 (358) Account of Spectatus 1's embassy to Persia in 358.
- 364/N29 (358) Introduction of letter-carrier, Harpocraton, poet, teacher of rhetoric, friend of the poet Eudaemon 3; mention of Nicentius 1, Modestus 2 and Fortunatianus 1.
- 374/B177 (summer 358) Praise and encouragement for A., who has taken up office of *vicarius* of Pietas. Request for help for Dianius, an impoverished decurion and distant kinsman of A.
- 381/B178 (summer 358) Request to oversee raising in Bithynia of two four-horse chariot teams, an imperial gift to the decurion Obodianus (*BLZG* 222), who will stage games.
- 386/B65 (summer 358) To Honoratus 2, previously as close a friend to Lib. as A., but no longer. Lib. does not understand why; mention of Quirinus.
- 21/N34 (summer 358) Request that A. intervene with Hermogenes 3, who has fined Nicentius 1, gov. of Syria in 358, for misconduct of which he is innocent.

Aristophanes

Career:

Son of a wealthy decurion of Corinth; his inheritance was allegedly appropriated by Flavius Eugenius 5, a relation by marriage; helped by Fortunatianus 1 to secure a post as imperial courier; sent in 357 by Musonius 1 to Egypt with Parnasius 1, Prefect of Egypt (357–59); both charged by Paulus 4 with treason, magic and extortion; exiled for three years; rehabilitated under Julian through Lib., who composed *Or.* 14 on his behalf;

- perhaps *vicarius* of Macedonia in 363; back in Corinth in 364.
- Qualities:* A Hellene, nephew of philosophers Diogenes 4 and Hierius 2. Model municipal man, as presented by Lib. to Julian in *Or.* 14. Wished to compose defence of Julian against detractors.
- Letters Received: 5 Letters Mentioned: 3
- 361/B118 (winter 357/8) To Parnasius 1, Prefect of Egypt (357–59), requesting favour for the poet Cleobulus 1. A. is with the Prefect and can speak for Cleobulus.
- 760/N94 (Sept.–Oct. 362) To the emperor Julian, responding to the emperor's *ep.* 52, requesting *Or.* 14 on behalf of A. This letter was delivered with *Or.* 14.
- 758/N95 (Sept.–Oct. 362) To the emperor Julian, promising to append the emperor's *ep.* 53 to published versions of *Or.* 14.
- 1402/N109 (summer 363) Account of the successes of the Persian campaign.
- 1154/N124 (first half 364) To Julianus 14. Lib. defends himself against charge of misuse of influence under Julian; mention of case of A.
- 1264/N133 (middle or end 364) A. is gathering literary material for defence of Julian. Lib. promises to send some, but not all, letters between himself and Julian; allusion to *Or.* 17; mention of Olympius 9, gov. of Achaea.
- Atarbius**
- Career:* Had influence at court in 359 (*ep.* 83/B121), probably as an assessor. He was gov. of Euphratensis (362–63); gov. of Macedonia (364).
- Qualities:* A Galatian from Ancyra; surely a pagan, since Julian appointed him. His level of culture is unclear, but Lib. praises his love of justice, hard work, concern for the councils.
- Letters Received: 8 Letters Mentioned: 0
- 83/B121 (359) Request for help for Sabinus 5, gov. of Syria (358–59) and now being prosecuted for misconduct in office.
- 1404/B14 (summer 363) Request that A. as governor assist Thalassius 2 and Bassianus 2, whose properties around the Euphrates are under attack.

Bassianus 2*Career:*

Son of Thalassius 1 (Praetorian Prefect, 351–54) and brother of Thalassius 2. Married Prisca 2, daughter of Helpidius 4 (Prefect of the East, 360–61) and Aristaenete. Pupil of Lib. (*epp.* 155, 231) before becoming *notarius*. Convicted of illegal divination at Antioch trials in 371–72 ; his property was confiscated (Amm. 29.2.5). His son, Aristaenetus 2, was Lib.'s pupil and became PUC in 392, Consul in 404. This son is the last known descendant of Lib.'s family.

Qualities:

Probably a Christian, since he was accused of converting a temple into a private house (*ep.* 1364/N105) and he married into a powerful Christian family.

Letters Received: 6 Letters Mentioned: 7

679/N79

(winter 361/62) B. has prudently written a letter of support for Julian's accession and stopped rumours.

1409/B17

(summer 363) To Prisca 2, B.'s new bride, who is welcomed into the family by Lib.

1410/B16

(summer 363) To Helpidius 4, B.'s new father-in-law, repairing bad relations between Lib. and Helpidius during his Prefecture (360–61).

1380/B15

(summer 363) To Aradius Rufinus 11, *comes Orientis* (363–64), requesting help against attacks on property of B. and Prisca during pagan revival.

1364/N105

(summer 363) To Gaianus 6, gov. of Phoenicia (362–63); defence of conduct of B. and his brother Thalassius 2, accused of converting temples into a house and now obliged to rebuild the temples.

1404/B14

(summer 363) To Atarbuius, gov. of Euphratensis (362–63), requesting help for Thalassius 2 and B., whose properties around the Euphrates are under attack.

Bassus 5/i*Career:*

Head of the corps of notaries (*primicerius notariorum*) in 358, thus supervisor of Lib.'s cousin, Spectatus 1.

Qualities:

Skill in shorthand; literary culture and religion unattested; his sons (one was Calliopius iii) were pupils of Lib. (356–58).

Letters Received: 3 Letters Mentioned: 2

359/N28

(358) Request that Honoratus 3, son of Quirinus, not be

obliged to report to B. in accordance with the summons that all men enrolled in a govt. department report to their superior. Honoratus 3 is ill and a young student.

366/B35 (spring 358) Second request concerning the Honoratus 3 of the preceding letter.

482/B52 (spring 356) To Araxius, PUC in 356. Allusion to sons of B. as letter-carriers.

Belaeus

Career: Gov. of Arabia (362–63).

Qualities: Schoolmate of Lib.; taught rhetoric; committed pagan appointed by Julian (Julian, *ep.* 114); accused of exacerbating religious tensions in Bostra, capital of Arabia.

Letters Received: 5 Letters Mentioned: 0

763/B130 (summer/autumn 362) Intervention for Orion, a Christian under attack for possessing temple property.

819/N103 (early 363) Second intervention for the Orion of the preceding letter.

Caesarius 1/iv

Career: Probably from Tarsus, since he was a son of Julianus 14 and brother of Alypius 4, thus member of extended Tarsus clan with close ties to Lib. Perhaps advocate; *vicarius* of Asia (362–63); CRP (363–64); PUC (365).

Qualities: Educated at Antioch; letters to him are ornate; Lib. often frustrated at how little help he extended.

Letters Received: 17 Letters Mentioned: 2

1399/B44 (April/June 363) Request for help in acquiring bears for the shows sponsored by Celsus 3.

1441/N117 (winter 363/64) To Hyperechius. C., recently promoted to CRP, is with the court en route to Ancyra. Lib. has spoken to him in Antioch and is providing a letter of introduction for Hyperechius (see following letter).

1443/B45 (winter 363/64) Hyperechius' letter of introduction to be given to C. (see preceding letter).

1449/B46 (winter 363/4) C. has summoned to court Acacius 8, who is having trouble securing a good political office in the anti-pagan reaction.

1459/N119 (winter 363/4) Request that C. secure the release of the approved imperial subvention for the games of the Syriarch, Celsus 3.

- 1113/B47 (early 364) Letter about C.'s many tasks and failure to write; mention of Celsus 3, gov. of Syria (363).
 1114/B48 (early 364) Another request for help for Hyperechius of Ancyra.

Calliopius 2/i

Career: Native of Antioch who had taught with Lib. in Antioch and Constantinople. Held unspecified post in imperial chancellery (*ep.* 442); assessor, perhaps in Euphratensis, in 359; gov. of Macedonia (362).

Qualities: Skilled in rhetoric, possibly also an advocate; a pagan appointed by Julian, but also connected to Datianus 1 at court.

Letters Received: 4 Letters Mentioned: 5

- 441/N13 (355) To Datianus 1 at court. Elaborate plea to help Lib. remain in Antioch. C. is at court and hands the letter to Datianus.

- 215/B122 (360) To Ammianus 3, assessor of gov. of Euphratensis, appealing for aid for C., now under indictment for his conduct as assessor.

- 220/B71 (360) To Domitius Modestus 2, *comes Orientis*, appealing for aid for C. in his legal troubles (see previous letter).

Celsus 3/i

Career: Antiochene who had studied with Lib. at Nicomedia (c. 350); studied with Julian and Basil in Athens in 355; pursued philosophy at Sicyon; in 352 he recommended that the Athenians offer Lib. a chair of rhetoric; he went to Constantinople in 359 to be enrolled in the senate and to study with Themistius; back in Antioch in 361. Gov. of Cilicia (362); gov. of Syria (363–64); Syriarch (364); summoned by Valens in 365 for an unspecified post, but wished to return to Antioch.

Qualities: A learned Hellene, son of the *principalis* Hesychius, who was also a pagan priest (*epp.* 724, 736/N88). A very close friend of Lib. and a model municipal man. Praise for his attributes at *Or.* 62.61–63.

Letters Received: 21 Letters Mentioned: 26

- 86/N44 (autumn 359) To Themistius 1, asking that C. be allowed to remain three more months in Antioch before taking

- up senate seat in Constantinople. Praise of his philosophical pursuits.
- 650/B152 (Sept./Oct. 361) To Fortunatianus 1, sorting out chronology of exchange of letters; mention of C. as letter-carrier.
- 661/B153 (Sept./Oct. 361) To Fortunatianus 1, still discussing exchange of letters; C. will testify to Lib.'s blamelessness; mention of need for silence and fear as civil war approaches.
- 696/N81 (early 362) Praise for C.'s efforts to revive city councils as governor. Request for unspecified favour for Seleucus 1 and wife Alexandra; elaborate praise of Alexandra.
- 715/B126 (spring 362) Thanks for C's efforts in dissuading Acacius 7 from sending son Titianus to study rhetoric in Athens.
- 716/N84 (spring 362) Fortunatianus 1 has met Julian in Constantinople and is now with C. in Cilicia. Lib. defends himself for not having written to Julian.
- 722/N85 (spring 362) Praise of the letter-carrier, Diogenes ii, who had championed Lib. in sophistic feuding against Acacius 6.
- 735/B127 (spring 362) To Acacius 7, defending his attitude towards the plan that Titianus study rhetoric in Athens (see previous letter). A letter of C. had first informed Lib. that the plan had been dropped.
- 736/N88 (July 362) Description of Lib.'s meeting with Julian at the Syrian frontier on 18 July.
- 1399/B44 (April–June 363) To Caesarius 1, *vicarius* of Asia, requesting help in acquiring bears for the shows sponsored by C.
- 1400/N108 (April–June 363) To Dulcitius 5, Proconsul of Asia (361–63), requesting help in acquiring bears for shows sponsored by C.; Secundus Salutius 3 and Aradius Rufinus 11 support the request.
- 1430/N116 (end 363) To Themistius 1, describing how Lib. and C. read and assessed a speech of Themistius on Julian. Lib's grief and companionship of Clearchus 1.
- 1459/N119 (winter 363/4) To Caesarius 1, CRP, requesting the release of the approved imperial subvention for C.'s games as Syriarch.

- 1113/B47 (early 364) To Caesarius 1, CRP, on his many tasks and failure to write; mention of C. as gov. of Syria.
- 1148/B49 (late winter 364) To Jovinus 1, CSL or CRP (364–65), expressing frustration that C.’s imperial subvention for the Syriarch’s beast fights has still not arrived.
- 1477/N141 (January 365) To Themistius 1, whose public praise of Lib.’s oratory has been reported to him. Lib. thinks of their rhetorical styles as ‘twins’ and in contrast to opponents, who are Asianists. C. is with Themistius.
- Clearchus 1/i**
- Career:* Native of Thesprotia; son of imperial official; had influence at Constantinople between 356 and 363, but posts cannot be identified; close relations with Themistius; *vicarius* of Asia (363–66); Proconsul of Asia (366–67); PUC (372–73, 382–84); Consul (after 384).
- Qualities:* Student of Nicocles and intimate of Themistius. A learned pagan, but no office under Julian. Lib. is often frustrated with his failure to do favours.
- Letters Received: 23 Letters Mentioned: 5
- 241/N42 (360?) To Themistius 1, congratulating him on his new nuptials. Request to receive kindly Eustochius 3, the letter-carrier. Eustochius’ business will be handled by C.
- 253/B78 (winter 360/1) Rebuke that C. has not assisted Olympius 3, whose entry into the senate is not proceeding smoothly.
- 668/B79 (autumn 361) Letter of introduction for Julianus 15; Secundus Salutius 3 and Olympius 3 are also admirers of Julianus.
- 1430/N116 (end 363) To Themistius 1, describing how Lib. and Celsus 3 read and assessed a speech of Themistius on Julian. Importance of C.’s companionship for Lib. in his grief.
- 1188/B80 (spring 364) To Theodorus 11, an assessor to C. as *vicarius* of Asia. Theodorus’ son is to be Lib.’s pupil, but, there is a report that his pedagogue is cruel. Praise of C. and his father as officials.
- 1265/N134 (autumn 364) To Nicocles, lamenting Julian’s death and deploring C.’s rude behaviour towards Nicocles. Promise to write a letter of reproof.

- 1266/B81 (autumn 364) The letter of reproof promised in the previous letter.
- Clematius 2/ii**
- Career:* Imperial courier (*agens in rebus*) in 354–55; sent to spy on Persian defences in summer 355; gov. of Palestine in 357–58 through patronage of the Prefect Anatolius 3.
- Qualities:* A devotee of sophistic performances and admirer of Lib. Presumably a pagan, though references to religion are few. Helped Antioch under danger from Gallus Caesar; capable administrator; ‘poor’ and above greed, but liable to frank, and therefore, imprudent speech.
- Letters Received: 16 Letters Mentioned: 17
- 405/N6 (355) To Aristaenetus 1. Detailed account of Lib.’s sophistic activities since return to Antioch. Enthusiasm of C. for Lib.’s performances.
- 430/N11 (winter 355) To Aristaenetus 1, still grieving for dead wife; detailed account of the activities of C., the letter-carrier, with mention of Strategius Musonianus, Alcimus and Phasganius.
- 435/B25 (winter 355/6) To Jovianus 1, a notary at court. Warm letter of introduction for C.
- 436/B29 (winter 355/6) To Barbatio, Master of the Infantry (355–59), requesting help in securing permission to remain in Antioch. C. has urged Lib. to write and Lib. has Barbatio’s kinsman, Gessius, as a pupil.
- 514/B27 (summer 356) Letter of introduction carried by Spectatus 1 en route to Milan.
- 556/B30 (early spring 357) To Barbatio, Master of the Infantry (355–59), introducing Letoius i. C. has arrived in Antioch without a letter from Barbatio.
- 563/B59 (spring 357) To the Prefect Anatolius 3. Letter of introduction for Pelagius 1, en route to court; thanks for political favours for C. and Aristaenetus.
- 315/B115 (357) C. has been slandered to the Prefect Musonianus for conduct as judge in a case in Palestine. Lib. counsels prudence and restraint. Ampelius and Evagrius 3 have supported C.
- 332/B116 (winter 357/8) Praise for C.’s administration, but concern that he pays too little attention to his personal wealth.

354/B117

(winter 357/8) The *comes* Jovinus 1 has visited C. in Palestine.

Datianus 1*Career:*

Influential courtier from Constantine to Valentinian, with brief eclipse under Julian; *notarius* with no known official posts; senator at Constantinople; *comes* under Constantius II; consul prior to 358.

Qualities:

Antiochene Christian; stenographer whose literary culture is unclear; beautified Antioch and aided Lib. on many occasions, but they were not intimate; letters to him can verge on sycophancy; Lib. attacked him after his death (*Or.* 1.94).

Letters Received: 20 Letters Mentioned: 4

409/N7

(summer 355) Plea for help in securing permission to stay in Antioch; allusion to the doctor Olympius 3.

435/B25

(winter 355/6) To Jovianus 1, a notary at court. Warm letter of introduction for Clematius 2; mention of suburban baths constructed by D.

441/N13

(winter 355/6) Elaborate plea to help Lib. remain in Antioch. Mention of Calliopius 2 in D.'s retinue, also of D.'s building projects in Antioch.

81/N47

(359) To the Prefect Anatolius 3, attacking his long, rambling letters. Criticism of D.'s arrogance.

1446/N118

(Nov./Dec. 363) D. has left Antioch with the emperor Jovian. Lib. went to the wrong city gate and missed the departure ceremony.

1173/B50

(March/April 364) D.'s property in and near Antioch was pillaged at the death of Jovian on 17 Feb. Lib. has received letter from D. and fearful Antiochenes have been keen to know its contents.

1184/N126

(March/April 364) Lib. intercedes with D. on behalf of city council, now held responsible for inaction when D.'s property was attacked.

1186/N128

(March/April 364) To Themistius 1, requesting a good reception for Antiochene embassy bringing gold crown to the new emperor Valentinian and pleading for intercession with D., if he is angry with Antioch.

1259/B51

(autumn 364) D.'s letter of pardon for Antioch has reached Lib., who has read it to everyone, especially the council.

Demetrius 2/i

- Career:* A leading citizen of Tarsus, brother of Hierocles 3 and Julianus 14; sophist, but did not teach; gov. of Phoenicia (before 358).
- Qualities:* A learned Hellene with whom Lib. exchanged orations. His son, Calycius, and several nephews were pupils of Lib.
Letters Received: 33 Letters Mentioned: 7
- 23/B144 (winter 358/9) Reproof that a young kinsman studying with Lib. lives in poverty.
- 33/N37 (winter 358/9) Description of recital of monodies composed for Aristaenetus 1 and Nicomedia after the earthquake of August 358. Recitals attended by Phasganius, Priscianus 1, a Philocles and Eusebius ix. Sabinus 5 was out of town. Request that D. send monody on his brother, Hierocles 3, recently deceased.
- 128/N59 (early 360) Lib. has received a letter and New Year's presents from D.
- 283/N64 (360) Lib. has delivered panegyric on his uncle Phasganius, who died in 359.
- 258/B145 (winter 360/1) Thanks for gifts from D.; allusion to Helpidius 4 stopping Lib.'s imperial salary; mention of Euphemius 2 and Olympius 3.
- 727/B146 (spring/summer 362) Lib. is suffering from migraines. Request for two orations on Asclepius recently composed by D.
- 785/N96 (January 363) Allusion to pressure from Julian to release text of *Or.* 12, composed for his consulship in 363; mention of the monody on the Temple of Apollo at Daphne, which burned in October 362.
- 1128/N123 (February/March 364) Allusion to long grief over Julian's death and recent resumption of composition.

Ecdicius

- Career:* Gov. of Galatia (360–61), after which he was accused of misconduct in office at Julian's court in 363.
- Qualities:* Long-time friend of Lib., but no discussion of literary culture; legalistic and hesitant to do favours; his sons are Lib.'s pupils. Probably a native of Antioch, but sometimes resident at Ancyra.
Letters Received: 3 Letters Mentioned: 4

- 308/N75 (summer 361) To Domitius Modestus 2, requesting intervention with new gov. of Galatia, Acacius 8, on behalf of Hyperechius; allusion to E. being unhelpful and wishing to 'hurt' Hyperechius.
- 1354/B110 (spring 363) To Maximus 19, gov. of Galatia, thanking him for consistent support for E. in period when E. was under attack. Julian has absolved E. of blame.

Entrechius 1

- Career:* Perhaps assessor of Salutius 3; gov. of Palestina Salutaris (361/2); gov. of Pisidia (362–64); other high posts after 365.
- Qualities:* Hellene known to Julian from 350s; student at Athens; praised Lib's teaching in Nicaea; relation (perhaps son-in-law) of Aristaenetus 1; devotee of eloquence while in political office.
- Letters Received: 7 Letters Mentioned: 1
- 13/B23 (353) To Julian, the future emperor. E. is travelling to Bithynia. Request that Julian summon him.
- 1424/N111 (autumn 363) Lament over death of Julian; praise of E.'s devotion to eloquence while in office.
- 901/N153 (388/9) E. lives at Nicaea and oversees family of Aristaenetus; fond memories of 350s and 360s; recollection of E.'s close relations with Julian and Salutius 3.

Eugnomonius

- Career:* Post in imperial chancellery, perhaps *magister epistularum graecarum* (357–58).
- Qualities:* Fellow pupil of Lib. in Athens; he composed the Greek versions of imperial correspondence; it is said that his letters are like Lib.'s in style. He did not reply to Lib.'s letters.
- Letters Received: 2 Letters Mentioned: 0
- 559/B31 (early spring 357) Letter of introduction for Letoius i, en route to Rome.
- 382/B34 (summer 358) Request to assist Olympius 6, an imperial courier who is not faring well.

Euphemius 2/i

- Career:* Important fiscal office, *comes sacrarum largitionum* or *rationalis rei privatae* (360–63).

- Qualities:* Landowner at Tarsus; former pupil of Lib.; religion unclear; praised for justice, goodness and accessibility.
Letters Received: 8 Letters Mentioned: 0
- 529/B28 (summer 356) Report on Lib.'s activities, esp. relations with rival Acacius 6 and lack of influence with the Prefect Strategius.
- 185/B42 (spring 360) E. should release Quirinus ii, whose daughter is to marry Rufinus 3, a friend of Lib.
- 210/N33 (360) Intercession for Antoninus 4, enrolled for corn-supply (*sitigia*).
- 258/B145 (winter 360/1) To Demetrius 2. E. is away on a hunt with the emperor, but will supply news on his return. Olympius 3 working for restoration of Lib.'s imperial salary.
- 620/B13 (summer 361) Intercession for kinsman Thalassius 2, under attack for misappropriation of property.
- Evagrius 6/iv**
- Career:* Decurion promoted to imperial posts, probably governorships, in 363 and 364 through patronage of Secundus Salutius 3; dismissed from office, flogged and fined, later acquitted. Became a priest in the church at Antioch and later appointed illegally as bishop; died soon after.
- Qualities:* Son of Antiochene *principalis* Pompeianus i and brother of Miccalus and Olympius 3; this last was a close friend of Lib. E. is said to have been a pupil of Lib., but his literary culture is not a feature of the many letters about him. He translated Athanasius' *Life of Antony* into Latin. Miccalus and E. became Christian; Olympius did not.
Letters Received: 1 Letters Mentioned: 15
- 1426/N112 (Sept./Oct. 363) To Secundus Salutius 3. Lament for the dead Julian; belated thanks for promotion of E. as governor.
- 1224/B168 (April 364) To Secundus Salutius 3, recalling promotion of E. to office; praise of Salutius' promotion of men of *paideia*, not notaries; plea for Arsenius 2, badly advised by Lib.
- 1287/N135 (autumn 364) Lib. responds to E's request for advice on how to be a good governor.

Florentius 3/ii

Career: Acting *magister officiorum* (355); full *magister officiorum* (359–61); condemned by the Commission of Chalcedon and exiled in 361, unjustly in the view of Ammianus (22.3.6).

Qualities: Of a distinguished Antiochene family; father Nigridianus consul in 350; praised for appreciating *paideia*, though not for possessing it; probably an example of the Christian aristocracy of service; Lib. had not known him previously, but found him very helpful. Letters Received: 13 Letters Mentioned: 0

510/B36 (?autumn 356) First letter to F., seeking to open a correspondence; Spectatus 1 has urged Lib. to write.
351/B37 (winter 358/9) Lib.'s activities, praise for F. and hope of a reply.

48/B38 (summer 359) F. and Spectatus 1 want Lib. invited to court to deliver speech before Constantius. Lib. pleads ill-health.

61/B39 (autumn 359) F. has summoned Priscianus 1 to court with hope of office; praise of F.'s governance and Priscianus' qualities.

72/B41 (autumn 359) Letter of introduction for Parthenius, nephew of Lib.'s close friend Eusebius ix.

97/N53 (early 360) Warm letter of introduction for Miccalus, brother of Olympius 3, summoned by F. to court.

219/B4 (summer 360) Intercession for Lib.'s cousin, the Syriarch, ordered by F. not to stage beast shows, but to reserve the animals for the emperor's hunt.

Fortunatianus 1/i

Career: Had influence at court under Constantius, since he is credited with appointing Aristophanes of Corinth as imperial courier (*Or.* 14.2); Petit, *FOL* 112, asserts that he was assessor to the Prefect Salutius in 363; he may be identical with the Fortunatianus who served as CRP in the East, 370–77.

Qualities: Native of Cappadocia, but resident at Antioch and Laodicea; poet, rhetor and philosopher; schoolmate of Lib. and close friend; committed Hellene, since allusions to religion are frequent, but no office under Julian.

- 364/N29 Letters Received: 11 Letters Mentioned: 1
(358) To Aristaenetus 1, thanking him for a letter sent to Nicentius 1 and Modestus 2. F. praised Modestus. Introduction of Harpocraton, poet, teacher of rhetoric, friend of the poet Eudaemon 3.
- 650/B152 (Sept./Oct. 361) F. is in the country; Lib. wishes him to visit.
- 661/B153 (Sept./Oct. 361) Protest by Lib. that he has written; expression of fear about approaching civil war.
- 1425/B154 (end of 363) The poet Philippus 3, a committed Hellene is under attack in the anti-pagan reaction. F. should introduce him to the Prefect Salutius.
- Gaianus 6**
- Career:* Native of Tyre; advocate, assessor to an official in Antioch prior to 362; gov. of Phoenicia (362–63).
- Qualities:* Deep interest in rhetoric; composed orations and had legal training from Berytus; pagan appointed by Julian; praised for justice, superiority to greed and firmness. Prickly about the etiquette of epistolary exchange.
- 336/B131 Letters Received: 14 Letters Mentioned: 2
(357) First letter to G.; intercession for impoverished decurion, Domnus.
- 119/B132 (357) Self-defence that Lib. had wished to hear G. plead in court, but had failed; request to help Boethus of Palestine.
- 799/B133 (winter 362/3) Good reports have reached court in Antioch about G.'s administration as governor.
- 800/B134 (winter 362/3) Reply to G., who has sent Lib.'s restored imperial salary.
- 1364/N105 (summer 363) Defence of conduct of Lib.'s kinsmen, Thalassius 2 and Bassianus 2, accused of converting temples into a house and now obliged to rebuild the temples.
- 1422/B135 (summer 363) First letter to G. after death of Julian; allusion to grief and silence.
- 1218/B136 (end 363) Self-defence against G.'s accusation that Lib. no longer writes because G. is out of office.
- 1221/N121 (end 363) To Andronicus 3, alluding to G.'s being put out and feeling slighted.

Helpidius 4/i*Career:*

Notary; Prefect of the East (360–61).

Qualities:

A pious Christian from Paphlagonia; lacked traditional *paideia*; notary; ‘common in appearance and speech’, but ‘straightforward and humane’ (Ammianus 21.6.9); a conspicuous example of the Christian aristocracy of service under Constantius. His daughter, Prisca 2, married Lib.’s kinsman, Bassianus 2.

Letters Received: 4 Letters Mentioned: 13

28/N65

(early 360) To Polychronius, an official under H., forgiving him for cutting Lib.’s imperial salary; the fault lies with H.

192/N66

(early 360) To Andronicus 3, gov. of Phoenicia; H. should have been angry over ill-treatment of the Sebon recommended here.

258/B145

(winter 360/1) To Demetrius 2, concerning the imperial salary. H. has vowed to ‘make war on the Muses’.

625/B124

(summer 361) To Priscianus 1, gov. of Euphratensis, introducing Seleucus 1, dispatched by H.

636/N77

(summer 361) To Anatolius 6 for Eustathius 3, charged with a mission by H.

740/N89

(summer 362) To Julianus 15. The salary cut by ‘that dunce H.’ has been restored by the new Prefect, Secundus Salutius 3.

1409/B17

(summer 363) To Prisca 2, daughter of H. and bride of Bassianus 2, welcoming her into the family.

1410/B16

(summer 363) Attempt to explain away poor relations between Lib. and H. during his Prefecture.

1380/B15

(summer 363) To Aradius Rufinus 11, *comes Orientis*, requesting help for new couple, Bassianus 2 and Prisca 2, whose properties are under attack during the pagan revival.

1156/B18

(spring 364) Lib. has met H.’s wife, Aristaenete, and his daughter, Prisca 2. Now he wants to see the new baby, left in Paphlagonia.

Helpidius 6/ii*Career:*

Unknown post at court in 355; with Julian in Gaul, perhaps as CRP (*FOL* 90); converted by Julian to polytheism; CRP (362–63), good access to the emperor and present on the Persian expedition; Proconsul of Asia

- (364); rallied to Procopius in 365, imprisoned, his property confiscated.
- Qualities:* Antiochene relation by marriage of Lib.; friend of Aristophanes of Corinth; literary culture not discussed, but loyal official of Julian; one of the few attested converts to polytheism under Julian
- Letters Received: 7 Letters Mentioned: 3
- 35/N38 (winter 358/9) To the Caesar Julian. H. is in Antioch; he has been improved by relations with Julian.
- 758/N95 (Sept./Oct. 362) To the emperor Julian, who has replied enthusiastically to *Or.* 14 for Aristophanes. Relief of Lib., who had feared hostile reception; he had rushed to H., who divulged the emperor's real views.
- 796/B156 (spring 363) To Hierax, upset at not being summoned to court; Lib. defends self, claiming he had recommended Hierax to H. and the emperor.
- 1120/N113 (October 363) Congratulations for being retained in office by Jovian; H. and Seleucus 1 must be reconciled with one another.
- 1180/N125 (early 364) Request that H. as Proconsul of Asia encourage athletes from Ionia to compete in the Olympia at Antioch in summer 364.

Hermogenes 3

- Career:* Prefect of the East (358–60); praised by Lib. for mild government; possibly to be identified with Hermogenes 2 and Hermogenes 9.
- Qualities:* Interest in philosophy; showed favour to Lib.
- Letters Received: 0 Letters Mentioned: 11
- 21/N34 (middle 358) To Aristaenetos 1. The new Prefect H. will pass through Nicaea; A. should intercede for Nicentius 1.
- 40/B82 (winter 358/9) To Themistius 1, requesting confirmation of exemption from senatorial tax granted by H. to Julianus 14.
- 49/N41 (early spring 359) To Domitius Modestus 2, confirming that Lib. has been working on H. to do a favour for Modestus.
- 127/N58 (early 360) To Acacius 7, whom H. exempted from a summons, either to the senate or to an office; mention of Andronicus 3 and Priscianus 1.

Hierius 4

- Career:* Governor prior to 360; Prefect of Egypt (364).
Qualities: Philosopher from Damascus; pagan; blamed for execution of Andronicus 3 after the revolt of Procopius (*Or.* 1.171).
 Letters Received: 1 Letters Mentioned: 1
 195/N67 (360) To Andronicus 3, introducing H. as philosopher and former governor.
 1183/B142 (spring 364) H. should encourage Egyptian athletes to compete in Olympia at Antioch.

Fl. Antonius Hierocles 3

- Career:* Gov. of Arabia (343/4); gov. of Syria (348); advocate and former teacher of rhetoric; died in 358.
Qualities: From Cilicia; interested in rhetoric; brother of Demetrius 2 and Julianus 14; his son Calycius was Lib.'s pupil.
 Letters Received: 8 Letters Mentioned: 9
 390/N3 (March 355) Consolation on death of Chromatius, a nephew and son-in-law.
 379/N32 (summer 358) To Calycius, son of H. and recently married, encouraging him to return to Antioch for further study.
 33/N37 (winter 358/9) To Demetrius 2, who has composed monody on his brother H., recently dead.
 40/B82 (winter 358/9) To Themistius 1, interceding for Julianus 14, who is introduced as brother of H.

Honoratus 2/i

- Career:* Gov. of Syria prior to 353; *comes Orientis* (353/4); Prefect of the Gauls (355/7); PUC (359–61).
Qualities: No allusion to literary culture; Christian; Lib. praises his justice and integrity, building projects in Constantinople.
 Letters Received: 4 Letters Mentioned: 1
 386/B65 (summer 358) Long letter about silence and presumed cooling of relations between H. and Lib.; mention of Theophilus 1 (?) and Quirinus i.
 251/B66 (winter 360/1) To H. as the first PUC, requesting help for Olympius 3, who is entering the senate at Constantinople.
 265/B67 (spring 361) Reassurance to H. that procurement of an imperial letter for Olympius 3 was not an attempt to circumvent H. as Prefect.

Honoratus 3/ii

- Career:* Notary (358–61).
Qualities: Son of Quirinus, an Antiochene and an imperial official; nephew of Apolinarius 1 and pupil of Lib. Studied stenography simultaneously with rhetoric. Ill in 358 and worried that he may be struck from list of notaries if he fails to report to court.
 Letters Received: 2 Letters Mentioned: 9
 405/N6 (spring 355) To Aristaenetus 1. H. is pupil with Lib.
 535/B57 (summer 356) To Anatolius 3, for Apolinarius 1, uncle of H., who is pupil with Lib.
 386/B65 (summer 358) To Honoratus 2; mention of H.'s illness.
 359/N28 (early 358) To Bassus 5, head of the corps of notaries, requesting that H. not be obliged to report to court in accordance with the summons that all men enrolled in a govt. department report to their superior. H. is ill and a student.
 365/B5 (early 358) To Spectatus 1, making same request as in previous letter.
 366/B35 (spring 358) To Bassus 5, repeating request of 359/N28 (see above).

Hypatius 1/i

- Career:* Gov. of Palestina Prima (360/1).
Qualities: Phoenician; former pupil of Lib.
 Letters Received: 3 Letters Mentioned: 2
 156/B88 (?360) To Andronicus 3, asking a favour for Auxentius v.
 158/B89 (?360) Reassurance that Andronicus 3, gov. of Phoenicia, has not neglected H.'s interests there.
 159/B90 (?360) Rebuke to Andronicus 3, gov. of Phoenicia, for neglecting H.'s interests there.

Hyperechius

- Career:* 'Supernumerary' on staff of gov. of Galatia, Acacius 8 (361–62); official in the office of the *castrensis sacri palatii*; failed to become senator or achieve any imperial post between 360 and 363. Rallied to the usurper Procopius and was placed in charge of troops, who surrendered him without a fight; he was executed.
Qualities: Son of wealthy decurion, Maximus xii, from Ancyra; long-time pupil in Nicomedia (343/8) of Lib., who

- intervened repeatedly in an effort to secure him a post. Despite his family wealth and the influence of his friends, he consistently failed to secure promotion.
Letters Received: 12 Letters Mentioned: 27
- 298/B99 (361) To Acacius 8, asking favour for Maximus xii and H.
308/N75 (361) To Domitius Modestus 2, *comes Orientis*, asking that H. not be a 'semi-civil servant'.
704/B179 (early 362) Lib. explains why he hasn't written; now is the time for H. to secure office, since Julian has come to power.
731/N87 (spring 362) Lib. urges H., who has received his inheritance, to be a decurion, as Julian would approve, rather than join the senate at Constantinople, as his father wishes.
732/B101 (spring 362) To Acacius 8, thanking him for kindnesses shown to H.
779/B107 (autumn 362) To Maximus 19, incoming gov. of Galatia, requesting that he assist H.
792/B180 (winter 362/3) Encouragement to go to Constantinople with Domitius Modestus, the new PUC, to prepare entry into the senate.
804/B74 (winter 362/3) To Domitius Modestus 2, praising him for assistance to H., who has hopes for a seat in the senate and later an imperial post.
810/N99 (winter 362/3) To Nicocles, urging him to assist H. in his endeavours in the capital; mention of Modestus' favour.
1350/B109 (spring 363) To Maximus 19, accused of official misconduct while gov. of Galatia. H. had loudly supported Maximus at Julian's court and thus deserves favour.
1441/N117 (late 363) Encouragement for H., whose political hopes have foundered; Lib. has intervened with Caesarius 1, the new CRP.
1443/B45 (winter 363/4) To Caesarius 1, warmly recommending H. for a post, apparently as an advocate at the CRP's tribunal.
1114/B48 (winter 363/4) To Caesarius 1, reminding him of their conversations about H. and requesting assistance.

Italicianus

- Career:* Native of Italy with influence at court in 355; Prefect of Egypt (359); gov. of Syria (360); *vicarius* of Asia (361).
- Qualities:* Bilingual in Latin and Greek; interested in sophistic pursuits; pagan; praised for his virtues in office; suitor for the hand of a daughter of Thalassius 1 and Theodora 2; she was thus Spectatus 1's niece and Italicianus was to become a relation by marriage of Lib., but it is unclear whether the marriage took place.
- Letters Received: 8 Letters Mentioned: 1
- 630/B10 (summer 361) Reassurance that Spectatus is assisting with the marriage plans by writing positive things to Bassiana, grandmother of the prospective bride.
- 666/B77 (autumn 361) Model letter of recommendation for Faustinus, Lib.'s former pupil.
- 1534/N143 (365) To Theodorus 11, gov. of ?Bithynia. Both he and I. had sent portraits of Aelius Aristides to Lib.

Jovinus 1/ii

- Career:* Influential at court from 355 onward, though his office is never clear; he appears close to the *magister officiorum*; CSL or CRP (364–65).
- Qualities:* Skilled in rhetoric; pagan; friend of Lib.'s friend Clematius 2.
- Letters Received: 11 Letters Mentioned: 1
- 354/B117 (358) To Clematius 2, who has received a visit from J.
- 1148/B49 (late winter 364) Request for help for Celsus 3, who has not received the imperial subvention he was promised for his beast shows.

Julianus 12/ii

- Career:* Maternal uncle of the emperor Julian; gov. of Phrygia (before 362); *comes Orientis* (362–63). Died in office.
- Qualities:* Christian who apostatised under Julian; pivotal figure in the pagan revival in the East.
- Letters Received: 2 Letters Mentioned: 4
- 695/B147 (winter 362) To Acacius 7, on his recent oration concerning Asclepius and the shrine at Aegae. Both the emperor and J. are mentioned in the speech.
- 701/N82 (winter 362) Compliments on his appointment as *comes*.
- 712/B181 (spring 362) To Bacchius. Lib. has described to J. how

- 715/B126 Bacchius orchestrated the festival of Artemis at Tarsus. (spring 362) To Celsus 3, encouraging him to send Titianus, son of Acacius 7, back to Antioch, where the *archon*, prob. the *comes* J., will receive him well.
- 725/N86 (spring 362) Request that J. write to Lib.
- Julianus 14/viii**
- Career:* Gov. of Phrygia (before 359); nominated senator in 359, he sought relief from liturgies; gov. of Euphratensis (361); *censitor* of Bithynia (363).
- Qualities:* Native of Tarsus; brother of Hierocles 3 and Demetrius 2; probably father of Alypius 4 and Caesarius 1; admirer of eloquence; in Petit's view, he was a Christian, thus explaining his appointment as *censitor*, cf. *FOL* 142.
- 40/B82 Letters Received: 5 Letters Mentioned: 5 (winter 358/9) To Themistius 1, requesting reduction of liturgies required for entry into the senate in Constantinople.
- 1367/B75 (May/June 363) To Domitius Modestus 2, introducing J., who has been appointed *censitor* in Bithynia.
- 1368/B76 (May/June 363) To Nicocles, requesting that he re-evaluate J.'s character and intervene with the emperor to have his political post changed.
- 1154/N124 (364) J. had pointed out that Lib. no longer has people deferring to him, now that Julian is dead. Lib. defends his conduct.
- Julianus 15/vii**
- Career:* Perhaps assessor of Secundus Salutius 3 (360/1); gov. of Phoenicia (362); *comes Orientis* (364).
- Qualities:* Native of Syria; proficient in Greek, Latin and law; his son was Lib.'s pupil.
- 668/B79 Letters Received: 2 Letters Mentioned: 10 (autumn 361) To Clearchus 1, introducing J.; mention of support of Salutius 3 and Olympius 3.
- 740/N89 (early 362) The Prefect Salutius has restored Lib.'s imperial salary, which had been cut by Helpidius 4.
- 1298/N136 (Feb./March 364) To Secundus Salutius 3, requesting a post for the unnamed letter-carrier, apparently J., who also carried *epp.* 1296 and 1297.

Fl. Claudius Julianus 29 (Emperor)

The chronology (with synopsis) of the letters exchanged between Lib. and Julian is set out in the introduction to B23. The emperor Julian is also mentioned in numerous letters.

Marius 1

Career: Gov. of Phoenicia (363–64).

Qualities: Native of Antioch; sophist; Lib. praises his administration.

Letters Received: 7 Letters Mentioned: 7

1460/B93 (363) To Andronicus 3, introducing M. as new governor.

1218/B136 (end 363) To Gaianus 6. Self-defence against Gaianus' accusation that Lib. no longer writes because Gaianus is out of office. M. had failed to deliver a recent letter.

1221/N121 (end 363) To Andronicus 3, describing the arrival of letters from M. and Andronicus while Lib. and Olympius 3 were strolling at Daphne; Gaianus is put out with Lib. and did not write; allusion to Lib.'s desire that Cimon be able to inherit.

1124/B137 (end 363) First allusion to Lib.'s resumption of declamations after death of Julian; the *comes Orientis* Rufinus 11 has agreed to attend the performance.

1135/B138 (363/4) Lib. has delivered the speech alluded to in the previous letter.

1170/B139 (spring 364) Introduction of Apringius, who is going to study law in Berytus.

1208/B140 (summer 364) Request that M. help Chrysogonus, a former pupil forced off his lands.

1217/B141 (autumn 364) Comment on the painfulness of the previous year; praise for M. as he leaves office.

Maximus 19/vi

Career: Gov. of Armenia (361); gov. of Galatia (362–64); Prefect of Egypt (364).

Qualities: Native of Raphia (Palestine); his wife was Antiochene and he owned property there; admirer of eloquence; organised sophistic competitions in Galatia and supported building projects; Lib. praises his justice, but he was accused of corruption.

Letters Received: 30 Letters Mentioned: 3

275/N73 (361) M. as gov. of Armenia should assist a city

- councillor who is a relation of the sophist Prohaeresius.
 779/B107 (autumn 362) M. as gov. of Galatia should assist Hyperechius of Ancyra; mention of previous governor, Acacius 8.
 791/B108 (autumn 362) Modestus 2 has been cleared of charges and is travelling to the capital to take up post of PUC.
 1350/B109 (spring 363) Hyperechius has defended M. against attacks made against him at court. M. has been cleared of charges.
 1354/B110 (spring 363) Lib. thanks M. for consistent support of Ecdicius in period when he was under attack. Julian has absolved Ecdicius of blame.
 1381/B111 (summer 363) Introduction of the Ancyrene decurion, Encratus; mention of Arion of Ancyra.
 1230/B112 (summer 364) To Castricius ii, a teacher of rhetoric, introducing M. as new Prefect of Egypt.

Miccalus*Career:*

Assessor or advocate under gov. of Euphratensis (360–61); gov. of Thrace (362); another unidentifiable office, perhaps in the diocese of Macedonia.

Qualities:

Son of wealthy Antiochene decurion, Pompeianus i; older brother of Evagrius 6 and of Lib.'s close friend, Olympius 3. Between 360 and 365, Lib. wrote ten letters on his behalf as he sought to escape curial duties. In later years, relations collapsed when M. feuded with his brother Olympius over the family inheritance.

Letters Received: 0 Letters Mentioned: 10

- 97/N53 (early 360) To Florentius 3, who has summoned M. to court. Warm letter of introduction; mention of Olympius 3.
 98/B9 (early 360) To Spectatus 1, expressing frustration that he will be of so little help to M., who is travelling to court.
 99/B83 (early 360) To Themistius 1, concerning entry into the senate of Olympius 3. His brother M. will explain the problem.
 149/N61 (early 360) To Priscianus 1, gov. of Euphratensis, whom M. has joined as an assessor or advocate.
 704/B179 (winter/spring 362) To Hyperechius, explaining the absence of letters, despite the many travellers headed to court. Now Lib. has a reliable letter-carrier in M.

Domitius Modestus 2

- Career:* Assessor of Prefect of Illyricum (357); *comes Orientis* (358–62); PUC (362–63); Prefect of the East (369–77); consul (prior to 372).
- Qualities:* Forceful administrator with a brilliant career; admirer of sophistic pursuits; trained in law; Christian under Constantius, he apostatised under Julian, then reconverted to Arianism under Valens; accused of harshness in his conduct of the Scythopolis trials in 359 (Amm. 19.12.6) and of exacerbating the cruelty of Valens (Amm. 29.1.10–11); he favoured Lib. highly.
- Letters Received: 48 Letters Mentioned: 19
- 583/B61 (spring 357) To Anatolius 3, who has summoned M. to be an assessor.
- 364/N29 (358) To Aristaenetus 1, whose letter made M., already a friend, even more of a friend; mention of Harpocraton, Eudaemon 3, Nicentius 1, and Fortunatianus 1.
- 49/N41 (early spring 359) Encouragement for his efforts on the Persian front. Lib. has been working on the Prefect Hermogenes to do a favour for M.
- 196/N68 (summer 359) Curial discontent in Antioch over M.'s portico of Dionysus.
- 197/N69 (summer 359) Intervention for Asterius, placed in charge of the bronze smiths at Antioch. He is old and the liturgy taxing, due to the demands made by the coming war.
- 242/B68 (summer 359) Recommendation for Strategius, the architect responsible for the portico of Dionysus.
- 34/N48 (early winter 359/60) To Iamblichus 2. M. has gone to Cilicia, perhaps to consult concerning the trials to be held at Scythopolis.
- 37/N49 (early winter 359/60) Intercession for Antiochenes recently arrested; mention of Antiochus ii, Antiochus iii and Arsenius 2.
- 96/N50 (late 359) Phasganius is dead.
- 101/N54 (winter 359/60) Request for assistance for the justice of the peace (*eirenephylax*) of Elusa, who is a relation of Lib.'s old teacher Zenobius.
- 108/B69 (winter 359/60) Request to show favour to kinsmen of Eudaemon 3 in Pelusium.

- 154/B70 (early 360) M. has hired some of Lib.'s students as advocates, but not all; he should hire them all.
- 163/N63 (early 360) M. should help Tryphonianus 2, gov. of Syria in 360, and accused of corruption by Ursulus 1, the *comes sacrarum largitionum*.
- 205/N70 (spring 360) Request for remission of the fine levied against the Alexandrians for civic unrest provoked by the Arian bishop Georgius.
- 215/B122 (spring 360) To Ammianus 3, assessor in Euphratensis, on behalf of Calliopius 2, who has legal troubles there. M. is the presiding judge.
- 217/N71 (summer 360) To Andronicus 3, requesting beast fighters for Lib.'s cousin, who is preparing the final spectacle of his Syriarchy; mention of M. offering little help.
- 220/B71 (summer 360) Intercession for Calliopius 2, who is under indictment; mention of his father, Montius Magnus 11.
- 277/N74 (summer 360) Request for help for the brother of the orator Megethius, saddled with a fine.
- 293/B72 (361) Intercession for two advocates from Armenia, Eusebius xi and Agroecius i, both pursued by their city council.
- 308/N75 (summer 361) Request that M. write to Acacius 8, gov. of Galatia on behalf of Hyperechius i, currently only a 'semi-civil servant'.
- 617/B73 (summer 361) Thanks to M. for having written the letter requested in the preceding letter.
- 636/N77 (summer 361) To Anatolius 4, gov. of Phoenicia, concerning a case of rape; mention of Helpidius 4 and M.
- 791/B108 (autumn 362) M. has been cleared of charges and is travelling to the capital to take up post of PUC.
- 792/B180 (winter 362/3) To Hyperechius, urging him to travel with M. to the capital and to seize the current opportunity for advancement.
- 804/B74 (winter 362/3) Praise for M.'s assistance to Hyperechius, who has hopes for a seat in the senate and later an imperial post.
- 810/N99 (winter 362/3) To Nicocles, urging him to assist Hyperechius in his endeavours in the capital; M. favours Hyperechius.

- 1367/B75 (May/June 363) M. has returned to Constantinople after riots; introduction of Julianus 14, tax assessor in Bithynia.
- 1368/B76 (May/June 363) To Nicocles, on his role in helping the Prefect M. return to the city.

Strategius Musonianus

- Career:* Comes under Constantine and Constantius; PUC (prior to 353); Proconsul of Achaea (353); Prefect of the East (354–58).
- Qualities:* Christian courtier versed in Greek and Latin; called ‘Musonianus’ by Constantine; admirer of Lib. and desirous of praise; accused by Ammianus (14.13) of venality; probably the uncle of Andronicus 3 whose rough personality is criticised in *epp.* 506/B54 and 515/N21; strong supporter of Lib., though their relations were occasionally difficult (cf. *Or.* 1.106–13).
Letters Received: 5 Letters Mentioned: 36
- 399/B86 (spring 355) To Andronicus 3, requesting that he cease to deal with Cleomenes, hated by unnamed man, probably M.
- 405/N6 (355) To Aristaenetus 1, recounting sophistic activities since return to Antioch; mention of short speech of praise for M.
- 430/N11 (355) To Aristaenetus 1, describing a visit with Clematius 2 to M.; mention of Alcimus and Phasganius.
- 434/N12 (355) To Themistius 1, congratulating him on nomination to senate at Constantinople; Lib. read the letter he sent to M.
- 435/B25 (winter 355/6) To Jovianus 1, mentioning visits of Lib. and Clematius 2 to M.
- 454/N14 (355/6) To Phasganius, recounting news from Antioch; M. annoyed that Lib.’s salary from Constantinople has been stopped.
- 476/N16 (spring 356) To Themistius 1, who has made trouble by revealing contents of a letter of Lib., who still has cool relations with M.
- 497/N18 (356) Relief that M.’s wife is recovering from sickness and joy at recent marriage of M.’s daughter.
- 506/B54 (late 356) To Andronicus 3, counselling flight from violence of harsh uncle, probably M.

- 515/N21 (late 356) To Andronicus 3, chiding his folly for thinking he can conciliate his harsh uncle, probably M.
- 552/N22 (Feb.–March 357) To Anatolius 3, for Letoius i, en route to Rome. M. has praised Anatolius' conduct before the emperor.
- 561/B173 (spring 357) To Aristaenetus 1, whose long letter to M. was received with pleasure.
- 580/N25 (spring 357) To Aristaenetus 1, mentioning Lib.'s panegyric on M.'s daughter.
- 315/B115 (357) To Clematius 2, whose conduct as a judge has made criticised; M. is now neither friend nor foe.
- 326/N26 (357/8) To Aristaenetus 1, whose joke against Lib. in a letter to M. greatly amused the Prefect.
- 330/B11 (357/8) To Aristaenetus 1, introducing young kinsman, Thalassius 2, whose qualities are also admired by M.
- 345/N27 (Jan./Feb. 358) To Acacius 7, describing M.'s pleasure at panegyric delivered by Lib.; mention of Titianus, Acacius' son, Eusebius ix, and Tuscianus 2.
- 362/B64 (358) To Anatolius 3, for the doctor Marcellus, who will also present a letter from M.; mention of Musonius 1.
- 388/N39 (winter 358/9) Grief over destruction of Nicomedia by earthquake in Aug. 358.

Musonius 1/i

Career: Proconsul of Achaea (prior to 362); *magister officiorum* (356–57).

Qualities: Admirer of eloquence; probably Christian; friendly relations with Lib.'s cousin, Spectatus 1.

Letters Received: 3 Letters Mentioned: 4

- 557/N23 (spring 357) To Mygdonius, who can make M. more favourable to Lib.; mention of Spectatus 1 and Nicocles.
- 558/B32 (spring 357) At the urging of Spectatus, Lib. writes first letter to M., requesting help for Letoius i on his embassy to Rome.
- 604/B33 (summer 357) Intercession for Olympius 6, an imperial courier; mention of M.'s friendship with Mygdonius.
- 362/B64 (early 358) To Anatolius 3, asked to intervene with M. on behalf of young sons of Marcellus, enrolled as imperial couriers and ordered to appear at court.
- 61/B39 (summer/autumn 359) To Florentius 3, praised for

- summoning Priscianus 1 to court with hope of office; praise of F. as official in comparison to predecessors, thus implicitly criticising M.
- 64/B40 (summer/autumn 359) To Spectatus 1, praising Florentius 3 in comparison to predecessors and, by implication, criticising M.
- Mygdonius**
- Career:* *Castrensis sacri palatii* (346); courtier of long standing, still with influence in 357.
- Qualities:* Admirer of eloquence, since he took a paternal interest in Lib. in Athens c. 340 and assisted him in his troubles in Constantinople in 342. Delivered letters in 362 from Theodora 3 to the emperor Julian (cf. Julian, *ep.* 5).
Letters Received: 2 Letters Mentioned: 1
- 557/N23 (spring 357) M. can make the *magister officiorum*, Musonius 1, more favourable to Lib; mention of Spectatus 1 and Nicocles.
- 604/B33 (spring 357) To Musonius 1, for Olympius 6; mention of M.'s friendship with Musonius.
- Nicocles**
- Career:* Grammarian at Constantinople with philosophical interests; teacher of Julian; prominent role under Julian, survived the criticism afterwards and returned to teaching.
- Qualities:* Native of Sparta; Lib.'s relations with him were occasionally cool in the 340s and 350s, but they were on good terms under Julian.
Letters Received: 10 Letters Mentioned: 5
- 557/N23 (spring 357) To Mygdonius, recalling past favours, including making N. favourable to Lib.; mention of Spectatus 1.
- 810/N99 (winter 362/3) N. should assist Hyperechius in his endeavours in the capital; mention of Modestus' goodwill towards Hyperechius.
- 1411/B98 (spring 363) To Aexander 5, for Eusebius 17, friend of N. and Lib. accused of undermining the revival of sacrifices.
- 1368/B76 (May/June 363) N. has helped the Prefect Modestus return to the capital. Now he must travel to the emperor

- to plead for the city, which has disturbed the peace. He should intervene for Julianus 14.
- 1119/N122 (end 363) Allusions to the anti-pagan reaction in Antioch in summer and autumn 363.
- 1196/B161 (spring 364) Lib. defends his conduct in anti-pagan reaction, particularly against the charge that he is over-friendly with enemies of the Hellenes.
- 1265/N134 (autumn 364) Lament over Julian's death and regret about Clearchus 1's rude behaviour towards N.'s family. Promise to write a letter of reproof.
- 1266/B81 (autumn 364) To Clearchus 1. The letter of reproof promised in the previous letter.
- Olympius 3/ii**
Career: Gov. of Macedonia (356), after which he was prosecuted and refused to hold office again; senator at Rome and transferred to Constantinople in 358/9; mistakenly saddled with a tax belonging to Olympius 7 and obliged to perform most expensive senatorial liturgy, though he was not wealthy and had been released from the senatorial surtax at Rome; released in 361 from the liturgy and necessity of residing in Constantinople; persuaded the authorities to exercise leniency after the riots in Antioch in 387.
- Qualities:* Son of wealthy Antiochene decurion, Pompeianus i; his older brother was Miccalus, his younger brother was Evagrius 6; close friend of Lib.; pagan; admirer of eloquence.
- Letters Received: 1 Letters Mentioned: 10
- 70/N43 (summer 359) To Themistius 1, concerning O.'s entry into the senate.
- 98/B9 (early 360) To Spectatus 1, asking help for Miccalus; Spectatus will have to answer to O. if he fails to act.
- 99/B83 (early 360) To Themistius 1, again requesting help for O.
- 251/B66 (winter 360/1) To Honoratus 2, PUC (359–61), requesting help with O.'s entry into the senate.
- 252/B84 (winter 360/1) To Themistius 1, again requesting help for O.
- 253/B78 (winter 360/1) To Clearchus 1, rebuking him for failing to help O.

- 258/B145 (winter 360/1) To Demetrius 2. The Prefect Helpidius 4 has stopped Lib.'s imperial salary; Lib. predicts that O.'s intervention will accomplish little; mention of Euphemius 2.
- 265/B67 (spring 361) To Honoratus 2, PUC (359–61), reassuring him that the imperial letter releasing O. from liturgies was not intended to undermine Honoratus' authority.

Olympius 6/vi

- Career:* Imperial courier (*agens in rebus*) in 357–58.
- Qualities:* Antiochene schoolmate of Lib. who abandoned rhetorical studies to become imperial courier; pagan.
- Letters Received: 0 Letters Mentioned: 9
- 604/B33 (summer 357) To Musonius 1, *magister officiorum*, requesting indulgence for O., who has not reported to his superior at court.
- 382/B34 (summer 358) To Eugnomonius, asking assistance in O.'s search for a lucrative posting as a courier.

Palladius 4/iv

- Career:* Notary; *magister officiorum* under Gallus Caesar (351/4); influential at court under Constantius, but condemned by the Commission of Chalcedon and banished to Britain in 361 because of his role in the downfall of Gallus.
- Qualities:* Notary; no mention of literary culture; Petit, *FOL* 186, suggests that he was a pagan, since *ep.* 440/B26 alludes to him 'delighting the mind of Zeus' by performing the requested favour.
- Letters Received: 3 Letters Mentioned: 3
- 435/B25 (winter 355/6) To Jovianus 1, a senior notary, warmly recommending Clematius 2, who had worked with P.
- 440/B26 (winter 355/6) Request for aid for Antiochus ii, sponsoring the Olympic Games in Antioch in 356.
- 61/B39 (autumn 359) To Florentius 3, praising his conduct in office and criticising his predecessors, among whom is P.; mention of Priscianus 1.
- 64/B40 (autumn 359) To Spectatus 1, praising Florentius 3 with disparaging allusion to predecessors, among whom is P.

Priscianus 1/i

- Career:* Gov. of Euphratensis (360–61); gov. of Cilicia (363–64); gov. of Palestina Prima (364).

- Qualities:* Native of Berytus; schoolmate of Lib. in Antioch; advocate at Berytus and Antioch; admirer of eloquence and lifelong friend of Lib.; pagan, but no post under Julian. He was disappointed at the posting to Cilicia and blamed Lib.
- Letters Received: 38 Letters Mentioned: 6
- 61/B39 (autumn 359) To Florentius 3, praising him for summoning Priscianus 1 to court with hope of office.
- 62/N51 (autumn 359) To Themistius 1, who has summoned P. to enter the senate in the capital.
- 64/B40 (autumn 359) To Spectatus 1, thanking him for promoting P.'s interests with Florentius 3.
- 127/N58 (early 360) To Acacius 7, summoned for office by the emperor. P. has reported this news from court while en route to take up office as gov. of Euphratensis; mention of Andronicus 3.
- 142/B123 (winter 359/60) Encouragement in his tasks as gov. of Euphratensis.
- 143/N60 (early 360) Allusions to beauty of P.'s letters and impoverishment of the Eastern provinces due to war with Persia.
- 149/N61 (early 360) Miccalus is serving as assessor or advocate under P.
- 625/B124 (summer 361) Introduction of Seleucus 1, sent to serve under P.
- 629/B125 (summer/autumn 361) The copyist Maeonius has asked that P. help a friend with legal difficulties in Euphratensis.
- 1251/N131 (autumn 364) Intercession for Antiochene Jews, disturbed by rumours that P. as gov. of Palestine will counsel the Prefect Salutius to grant important post to a tyrannical Jewish elder previously expelled from the same post.
- 1253/N132 (autumn 364) Intercession for Manichaeans concerned about persecution of their sect in Palestine.

Quirinus i

Career:

Sophist and rhetor; assessor to Philippus 7 (Prefect of the East, 344–51), gov. of Lycia (before 354), gov. of Pamphylia (before 354), gov. of Cyprus (before 354);

- Qualities:* offered post in 357 under Honoratus 2 (Prefect of the Gauls, 354–57), but declined due to his son's ill-health. Native of Antioch; teacher of rhetoric and warm supporter of Lib., to whom he sent his son, Honoratus 3. Large personal fortune, but praised for emerging from office 'poor'. His family was closely allied with that of Lib. Committed Hellene, but his son learned stenography as well as rhetoric.
- Letters Received: 2 Letters Mentioned: 12
- 405/N6 (spring/summer 355) To Aristaenetus 1, describing sophistic activities since return to Antioch. Q. is strong supporter.
- 535/B57 (summer 356) To Anatolius 3, for Q.'s brother, Apolinarius 1, who is summoned to court in Italy.
- 359/N28 (early 358) To Bassus 5, head of the corps of notaries, asking that Q.'s son, Honoratus 3, enrolled as a notary, not be obliged to report for duty as ordered. He is a student and convalescing from illness.
- 365/B5 (spring 358) To Spectatus 1, chiding him for not assisting Q. and Honoratus in the matter mentioned in the previous letter.
- 366/B35 (spring 358) To Bassus 5, repeating request of *ep.* 359/N28 above.
- 386/B65 (summer 358) To Honoratus 2, with mention of his summons of Q. to share labours in Gaul; mention of Aristaenetus.

Aradius Rufinus 11/v

- Career:* *Comes Orientis* (363–64); PUR (376); an ancestor had been gov. at Antioch and had a statue erected there in his honour; died in 401/2.
- Qualities:* Of a distinguished family at Rome; fluent in Latin and Greek with philosophical interests; pagan; Lib. had good relations with him as *comes*.
- Letters Received: 8 Letters Mentioned: 5
- 1365/N106 (March/June 363) For Letoius i, charged by the gov. of Syria with reclaiming fugitive decurions.
- 1380/B15 (summer 363) Request for help for Bassianus 2, whose wife is in a property dispute.
- 1400/N108 (summer 363) To Dulcitius 5, Proconsul of Asia (361–

63), requesting help in acquiring bears for the shows sponsored by Celsus 3; Secundus Salutius 3 and R. support the request.

1124/B137 (end 363) To Marius 1. First allusion to Lib.'s resumption of declamations after death of Julian; R. has agreed to attend the performance.

1135/B138 (winter 363/4) To Marius 1. The speech alluded to in the previous letter went well and R. proved a good judge.

Sabinus 5/i

Career: Advocate at tribunal of Prefect Strategius Musonianus (356); with help of Anatolius 3, he became gov. of Syria in 358–59, was dismissed under a cloud and refused to seek office again.

Qualities: Rhetor and admirer of eloquence; close personal friend of Lib.; his two sons studied with Lib. in 364; his religion is unclear.

Letters Received: 2 Letters Mentioned: 6

545/B2 (winter 356/7) To Spectatus 1, asking help so that S. secures a higher rank.

339/B62 (winter 358/9) To Anatolius 3, thanking him for promotion of S. to governorship of Syria.

33/N37 (winter 358/9) To Demetrius 2, describing recital of monodies composed for Aristaenetus 1 and Nicomedia after the earthquake of August 358. Recitals attended by Phasganius, Priscianus 1, a Philocles and Eusebius ix. S. was out of town.

Secundus Salutius 3

Career: Gov. of Aquitania; *magister memoriae*; *comes primi ordinis*; Proconsul of Africa; *comes primi ordinis intra consistorium et quaestor*; assigned by Constantius as adviser to Julian in Gaul; recalled in 359; appointed Prefect of the East by Julian and retained by Jovian and Valens (361–65, 365–67). At Julian's death, he was offered the throne, but declined due to old age and ill-health.

Qualities: Praised by pagans and Christians alike for intelligence, eloquence, justice, goodness, incorruptibility, magnanimity. A Hellene who promoted men of *paideia* without rousing anger of Christians, who praised his moderation.

	Letters Received: 13 Letters Mentioned: 6
740/N89	(early 362) To Julianus 15, gov. of Phoenicia, reporting restoration by S. of Lib.'s imperial salary, cut by the Prefect Helpidius 4 in 360.
1400/N108	(summer 363) To Dulcitius 5, Proconsul of Asia (361–63), requesting help in acquiring bears for the shows sponsored by Celsus 3; S. and Rufinus 11 support the request.
1425/B154	(end 363) To Fortunatianus 1, who should introduce to S. the poet Philippus 3, a Hellene under attack in the anti-pagan reaction.
1426/N112	(Sept./Oct. 363) Lament for the dead Julian; belated thanks for promotion of Evagrius 6 as governor.
1185/N127	(Feb./March 364) Consolation for S.'s personal loss of friend and request for a kind reception for the embassy from Antioch sent to congratulate the new emperor Valentinian on his accession (26 Feb. 364).
1186/N128	(Feb./March 364) To Themistius 1, requesting assistance for the embassy mentioned in the previous letter.
1298/N136	(Feb./March 364) Request for a post for the unnamed letter-carrier, apparently Julianus 15.
1224/B168	(April 364) Praise for promoting men of <i>paideia</i> ; surprise that Arsenius 2 has been passed over; request that Arsenius be forgiven if he has given offence, after following Lib.'s advice.
1233/B169	(April/June 364) To Callistio, assessor to S., on behalf of Arsenius 2, discussed in previous letter.
1251/N131	(autumn 364) To Priscianus 1, on behalf of Antiochene Jews, disturbed by rumours that Priscianus as gov. of Palestine will counsel S. as Prefect to grant important post to a tyrannical Jewish elder previously expelled from the same post.

Seleucus 1

Career:

Sent to Euphratensis in 361 by the Praetorian Prefect on business with Priscianus 1; High Priest of ?Cilicia (362); made *comes* under Julian; accompanied the Persian expedition; intended to compose a history of the expedition; fined and banished in 364/5.

Qualities:

Learned Hellene whose friendship with Julian and Lib. went back to early 350s; married Alexandra, sister of

- Calliopius 3, an assistant teacher of Lib.; possibly the father of Olympias 2 and thus the son of the Prefect Ablabius 4, but it seems unlikely that this committed Hellene should have had a father and daughter conspicuous for their Christianity.
- Letters Received: 6 Letters Mentioned: 8
- 13/B23 (autumn 353) To the emperor Julian, whose convalescence S. failed to mention to Lib.
- 625/B124 (summer 361) To Priscianus 1, gov. of Euphratensis, introducing S., dispatched by the Praetorian Prefect.
- 696/N81 (early 362) To Celsus 3, requesting a favour for S. and his wife Alexandra.
- 697/B129 (early 362) Lib. explains why he did not travel to Constantinople to meet Julian.
- 734/B155 (July/August 362) To Alexandra, wife of S., mentioning his promotion to rank of *comes* and failure to come to Antioch with Julian.
- 770/N92 (August 362) Congratulations for S.'s appointment as provincial High-Priest, perhaps in Cilicia.
- 802/N98 (March 363) To the emperor Julian, regretting inability to participate in Persian campaign, but S. will witness everything.
- 1120/N113 (October 363) To Helpidius 6, retained as *comes rei privatae* by Jovian; he and S. must cease feuding.
- 1473/N140 (early 365) S. has been fined, yet still sends New Year's gifts to Lib.
- 1508/N142 (spring 365) S. is banished to rural Pontus; encouragement not to despair of relegation and to write the history of the Persian campaign, as previously intended.

Spectatus 1

Career:

Tribunus et notarius (?early 350s–361); envoy to Persia in 358 with Prosper and Eustathius 1; frequent trips between East and court in the West in 350s; wide-ranging contacts as notary; apparently in official disgrace in 361 (cf. *ep.* 618), but still alive in 363.

Qualities:

Son of Lib.'s uncle Panolbius; brother of Theodora 2; uncle of Thalassius 2 and Bassianus 2; Christian, like his sister and nephews; co-heir with Lib. of Phasganius'

- property; Lib.'s most important intermediary at Constantius' court, but often criticised for failing to exert himself more in helping Lib.'s friends.
 Letters Received: 11 Letters Mentioned: 24
- 427 /N9 (late summer 355) To Aristaenetus 1, introducing S.
 454/N14 (355/6) To Phasganius, recounting news from Antioch; S. is predicting that Lib.'s transfer to Antioch will be successful.
- 510/B36 (?autumn 356) To Florentius 3, acting *magister officiorum*, seeking to open a correspondence; S. has urged Lib. to write.
- 512/B56 (summer 356) To Anatolius 3, who, according to S., is declining the Prefecture of the East.
- 514/B27 (summer 356) To Clematius 2, introducing S., en route to Milan.
- 545/B2 (356/7) Three favours are requested: imperial subvention for their cousin, the Syriarch; higher rank for Sabinus 5; restoration of Lib.'s salary from Constantinople.
- 557/N23 (spring 357) To Mygdonius, introducing Letoius i; S. has reported Mygdonius' warm recollections of earlier days with Lib.; mention of Nicocles.
- 558/B32 (spring 357) To Musonius, requesting help for Letoius i on embassy to Rome; written at S.'s urging.
- 562/B174 (spring 357) To Aristaenetus 1, whose political appointment S. has reported; introduction of Pelagius 1, en route to court.
- 563/B59 (spring 357) To Anatolius 3, from whom S. has delivered long-overdue letter; praise for political appointments of Clematius 2 and Aristaenetus 1.
- 365/B5 (early 358) Frustration at S.'s failure to help Quirinus and his son, Honoratus 3.
- 377/B12 (summer 358) To Thalassius 2, taking his uncle S. as his model of conduct at court.
- 331/N35 (358) To Aristaenetus 1, recounting S.'s oratorical triumph on embassy to Persia.
- 333/B6 (summer 358) To Anatolius 3, recounting S.'s oratorical triumph on embassy to Persia.
- 352/B7 (summer 358) Amusing account of S.'s trip to Persia and presents for family members.

- 19/N40 (winter 358/9) To Anatolius 3, defending S. as orator, dismissed by Anatolius as mere bureaucrat; mention of Severus 9 and Januarius 4.
- 48/B38 (summer 359) To Florentius 3, who, along with S., wants Lib. invited to court to deliver speech before Constantius. Lib. pleads ill-health.
- 64/B40 (summer/autumn 359) Lib. forgives S. for scheme to invite him to court and thanks him for role in promotion of Priscianus 1.
- 74/B8 (summer/autumn 359) Frustration that S. does not do more to help Lib.'s friends; introduction of Parthenius.
- 98/B9 (early 360) Frustration with S.'s failure to help friends; introduction of Miccalus.
- 115/N56 (early 360) S. has inherited Phasganius' house, Lib. his lands; an enemy is contesting the will.
- 630/B10 (summer 361) To Italicianus, whose hope of marrying a kinswoman are being helped by S.
- 793/B85 (winter 362/3) To Themistius 1, who took offence at a remark of Lib. repeated by S.

Thalassius 1/i*Career:*

Comes under Constantius and entrusted with important affairs, both secular and religious; Praetorian Prefect to Gallus Caesar (351–54); he died in 354.

Qualities:

He married Theodora 2, daughter of Lib.'s uncle Panolbius; father of Thalassius 2 and Bassianus 2. Large landholdings in Antioch, Tyre and in Euphratensis. Christian courtier of 'imperious disposition' (Ammianus 14.1.10), his damaging reports contributed to Gallus Caesar's downfall.

Letters Received: 1 Letters Mentioned: 5

- 16/N2 (352–53) Praise for his work as Prefect; Lib. asks for assistance in returning permanently to Antioch.
- 330/B11 (357/8) To Aristaenetos 1, introducing Thalassius 2, a son whose qualities surpass even his father's.
- 1364/N105 (summer 363) To Gaianus 6, defending T.'s sons against charge of converting temples into a house and now obliged to rebuild the temples.
- 1404/B14 (summer 363) To Atarbios, requesting help for T.'s sons, whose properties in Euphratensis are under attack.

Thalassius 2/ii

- Career:* Unnamed post in an imperial chancellery (357/8–361); *ex proximo libellorum* in 362 (Ammianus 22.9.16), presumably an honorary title acquired by purchase. The *proximus* was a senior official, second in charge after the *magister libellorum*. T.'s landholdings in Antioch, Tyre and in Euphratensis came under legal attack from 361 onwards.
- Qualities:* Son of Thalassius 1 and brother of Bassianus 2; Christian; minimal study of rhetoric; praised for capacity for friendship and self-control in great wealth. Letters Received: 2 Letters Mentioned: 4
- 330/B11 (357/8) To Aristaenetos 1, introducing T., whose qualities are also admired by the Prefect Strategius.
- 377/B12 (summer 358) T. is at court seeking advancement; mention of Spectatus.
- 620/B13 (summer 361) To Euphemius 2, a fiscal official, requesting help for T., accused of misappropriating civic property.
- 1364/N105 (summer 363) To Gaianus 6, defending T. and his brother against charge of converting temples into a house and now obliged to rebuild the temples.
- 1404/B14 (summer 363) To Atarbios, requesting help for T. and his brother, whose properties in Euphratensis are under attack.

Themistius 1/i

- Career:* Most famous orator and philosopher in the eastern empire of the 4th cent.; respected philosophical adviser to all emperors from Constantius to Theodosius, with exception of Julian; senator at Constantinople (from 355); key member of the panel charged with expanding eastern senate (from 358); PUC (384).
- Qualities:* Native of Byzantium; son of a philosopher, Eugenius 2; pagan philosopher of great learning and consummate orator; Lib. had met him in early 350s and they enjoyed warm relations. Letters Received: 40 Letters Mentioned: 12
- 434/N12 (Nov. 355) Congratulations on his nomination to the senate in Constantinople.

- 476/N16 (spring 356) T. has made trouble by revealing contents of a letter of Lib.; mention of difficult relations with the Prefect Strategius.
- 515/N21 (winter 356/57) To Andronicus 3, whose angry uncle is implacable; neither Lib. nor T. can mollify him.
- 40/B82 (winter 358/9) Intercession for Julianus 14, summoned to be a senator.
- 241/N42 (?summer 359) Introduction of Eustochius 3, whose business in the city will be handled by Clearchus 1, close associate of T.
- 70/N43 (summer 359) Intercession for Olympius 3, summoned to be senator.
- 76/B171 (autumn 359) To Aetius 1, summoned to be a senator in response to T.'s summons.
- 62/N51 (autumn 359) Introduction of Priscianus 1, summoned to court for office, and then entry into the senate.
- 66/N52 (autumn 359) T. is reunited with the emperor and it is reported that he is on intimate terms with him; mention of Evagrius 2, Eudaemon 2 and Meterius.
- 86/N44 (autumn 359) Celsus 3 is to be made senator. T. is requested to make his entrance fees moderate.
- 99/B83 (late autumn 359) Second request for help for Olympius 3 (cf. *ep.* 70/N43 above).
- 112/N55 (early 360) Introduction of Dorotheus, praised for endurance under torture at the Scythopolis trials in 359 and refusal to implicate the family of Argyrius, who are friends of T.
- 252/B84 (winter 360/1) Detailed explanation of circumstances of Olympius 3, who needs relief from requirements for entry into the senate.
- 793/B85 (winter 362/3) T. has taken offence at a remark of Lib. repeated by Spectatus 1. Lib. defends himself.
- 818/N102 (early 363) Lib. assumed that the previous letter would mollify T., but copies of a recent oration and letters have arrived in Antioch, but nothing for Lib. T. should cease to be angry, if he still is, and send the oration.
- 1430/N116 (end 363) Lib. and Celsus 3 have read and assessed T.'s speech on Julian; Lib's grief over Julian; companionship of Clearchus 1.

1186/N128 (April 364) T. is asked to assist Antiochene envoys carrying crown gold (*aurum coronarium*) to new emperor Jovian; T. should win goodwill of Salutius 3 and mollify Datianus 1, if he is angry over vandalism of his property in Antioch.

1477/N141 (Jan. 365) A report has reached Antioch that T. publicly praised Lib.'s literary style, in comparison to other contemporaries. Lib. returns the compliment.

Theodorus 11/iii

Career: Advocate at Antioch (from 358); assessor to Clearchus 1; *vicarius* of Asia (363–66); gov. of ?Bithynia (364–65).
Qualities: Native of Arabia; skilled in law and rhetoric; pagan; two sons, one of whom, also Theodorus, was Lib.'s pupil.
 Letters Received: 6 Letters Mentioned: 5
 339/B62 (?autumn 358) To Anatolius 3, praising the appointment of Sabinus 5 as gov. of Syria. Appeal to help T. in similar way.
 1188/B80 (spring 364) T.'s son is to be Lib.'s pupil, but there is a report that his pedagogue is cruel. Praise of Clearchus 1 as official.
 1534/N143 (365) T. and Italicianus have sent portraits of Aelius Aristides to Lib.

APPENDIX 2

INDEX OF LIBANIUS' LETTERS TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH

B = Bradbury N = Norman

<i>Foerster B/N</i>		<i>Foerster B/N</i>		<i>Foerster B/N</i>	
12	N145	83	B121	175	B92
13	B23	86	N44	185	B42
15	N1	88	N45	192	N66
16	N2	95	B120	195	N67
19	N40	96	N50	196	N68
21	N34	97	N53	197	N69
23	B144	98	B9	205	N70
25	N36	99	B83	210	N33
28	N65	101	N54	215	B122
33	N37	108	B69	217	N71
34	N48	112	N55	218	B3
35	N38	115	N56	219	B4
37	N49	119	B132	220	B71
40	B82	123	B150	241	N42
48	B38	126	N57	242	B68
49	N41	127	N58	251	B66
61	B39	128	N59	252	B84
62	N51	142	B123	253	B78
64	B40	143	N60	255	B151
66	N52	149	N61	258	B145
70	N43	150	N62	263	N72
72	B41	154	B70	265	B67
74	B8	156	B88	275	N73
75	B119	158	B89	277	N74
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81	N47	166	B91	298	B99

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 359 N28
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 362 B64
 364 N29
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 369 N30
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 377 B12
 379 N32
 381 B178
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 385 B20
 386 B65
 388 N39
 390 N3
 391 N4
 393 N5
 399 B86
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 409 N7
 414 N8

Foerster B/N

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 428 N10
 430 N11
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 434 N12
 435 B25
 436 B29
 438 B55
 440 B26
 441 N13
 454 N14
 458 B113
 459 B114
 469 N15
 476 N16
 477 N17
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 497 N18
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 650 B152
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 656 B106
 661 B153
 666 B77
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 679 N79
 694 N80
 695 B147
 696 N81
 697 B129
 701 N82

<i>Foerster B/N</i>		<i>Foerster B/N</i>		<i>Foerster B/N</i>	
704	B179	818	N102	1023	N179
710	N83	819	N103	1024	N180
712	B181	826	B158	1036	N181
715	B126	838	B94	1048	N182
716	N84	840	N146	1050	N183
722	N85	843	N147	1051	N184
724	B182	846	N148	1053	N185
725	N86	852	N149	1057	N186
727	B146	866	N150	1058	N187
731	N87	867	N151	1063	N188
732	B101	868	N152	1064	N189
734	B155	901	N153	1066	N190
735	B127	904	N154	1075	N191
736	N88	905	N155	1093	N192
739	B43	906	N156	1106	N193
740	N89	907	N157	1113	B47
754	N90	908	N158	1114	B48
757	N91	909	N159	1119	N122
758	N95	914	N160	1120	N113
760	N94	922	N161	1124	B137
763	B130	923	N162	1128	N123
770	N92	925	N163	1131	B165
779	B107	926	N164	1135	B138
785	N96	938	N165	1148	B49
791	B108	947	N166	1154	N124
792	B180	951	N167	1155	B143
793	B85	957	N168	1156	B18
796	B156	959	N169	1165	B160
797	N97	960	N170	1170	B139
799	B133	964	N171	1171	B166
800	B134	972	N172	1173	B50
801	B21	990	N173	1174	B102
802	N98	994	N174	1180	N125
804	B74	1001	N175	1183	B142
810	N99	1002	N176	1184	N126
811	N100	1004	N177	1185	N127
815	N101	1021	N178	1186	N128

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